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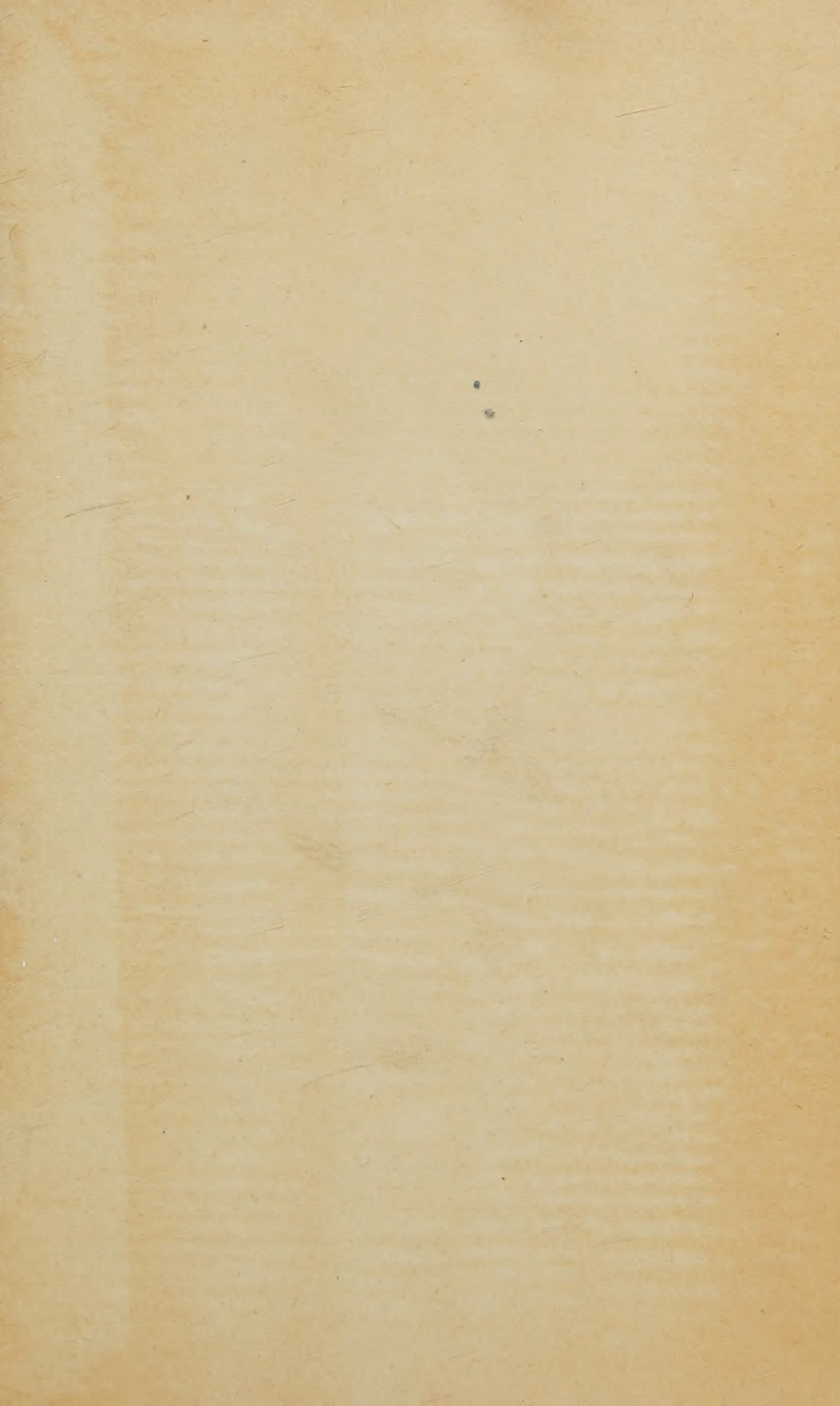
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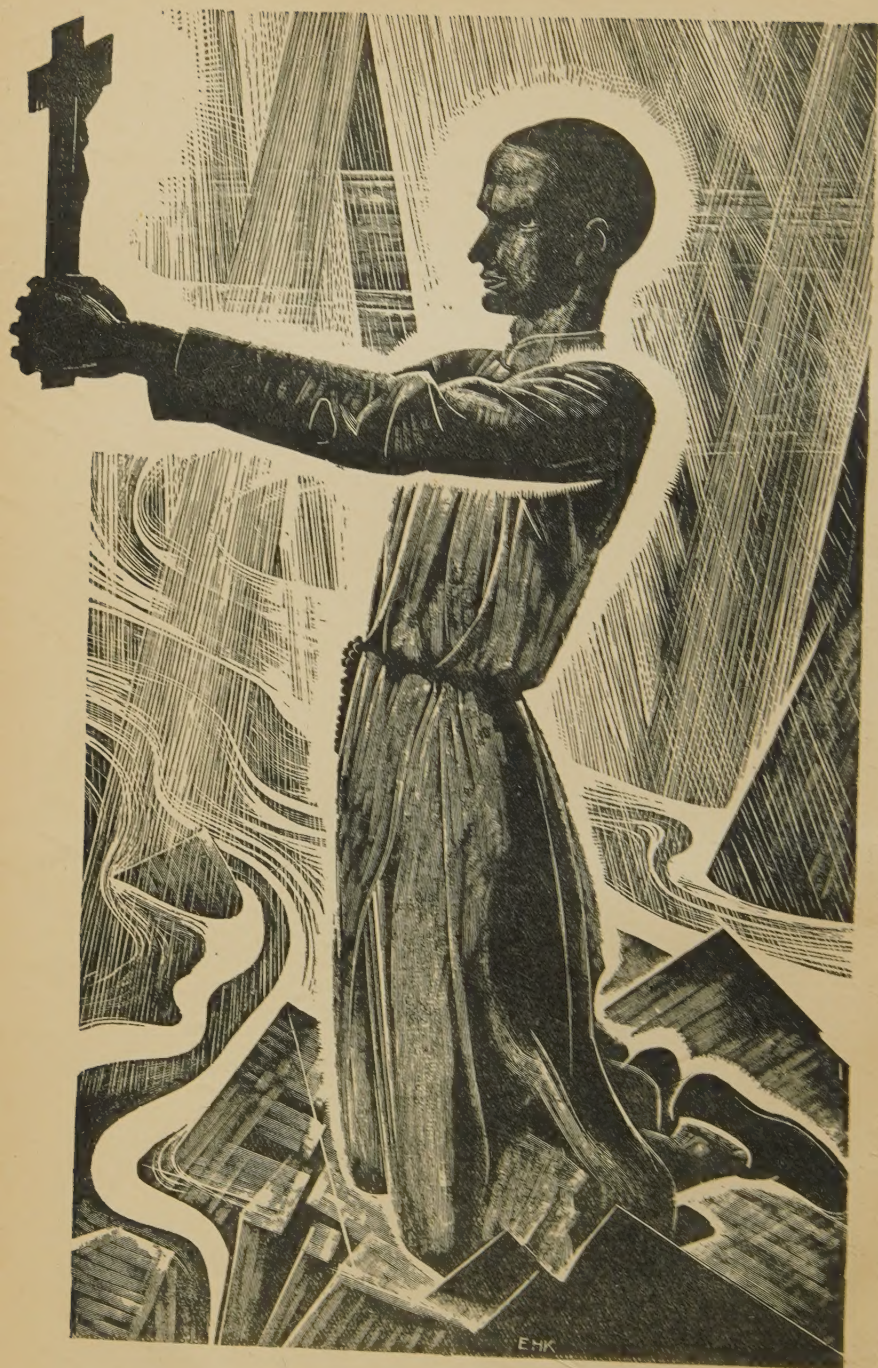
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THE VOCATION OF
ALOYSIUS GONZAGA



ЕНК

This woodcut, by Mr. ERIC KENNINGTON, symbolises the Vocation of Aloysius Gonzaga. The Saint, a man of bronze, kneels on a rock amid the swirl of things; but the bronze lives, thrilled by the deluge of the Holy Ghost. Aloysius has to respond in his own way to Christ, who, though He was God, abdicated the external homage due to God, taking a servant's form, and "humbling Himself" even to a death upon a cross. Aloysius, with all his will, responds. The strain is still seen as terrific: peace is not yet consummated; but victory will be absolute.

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THE VOCATION OF ALOYSIUS GONZAGA

Copy of Charles
BY
C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J. 1879-

LONDON: SHEED & WARD
31 PATERNOSTER ROW

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First Published 1927

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Printed in Great Britain

CONTENTS

PART I

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION - - - - -	ix
CHAPTER	
I. THE POISONED FIELD - - - - -	3
II. TIGER-LILY - - - - -	24
III. SUME ET SUSCIPE ! - - - - -	36
IV. "DIRECT ME !" - - - - -	62
V. LA GONZAGHINA - - - - -	78
VI. TEMPESTUOUS DAWN - - - - -	102
VII. TENDIMUS IN PATRIAM - - - - -	126

PART II

CHAPTER	
I. SCALPR : SALUBRIS ICTIBUS - - - - -	137
II. THE TESTED STEEL - - - - -	168
III. TRANQUILLITAS MAGNA - - - - -	196
IV. FLUMEN IN FONTEM - - - - -	217
V. CUM FRATRIBUS FRATER - - - - -	235
APPENDIX I. THE BICENTENARY - - - - -	253
APPENDIX II. THE MEDITATION ON THE ANGELS : THE ORATION TO PHILIP II OF SPAIN	267

Imprimi Potest

HENRICUS KEANE,
Praep. Prov. Angliæ.

Nihil Obstat

EDWARDUS MAHONY, S.T.D.,
Censor Deputatus.

Imprimatur

EDM. CAN. SURMONT,
Vic. Gen.

Westmonasterii,
die 29 Augusti, 1927.

INTRODUCTION

THE first to write any kind of 'life' of Aloysius Gonzaga was Fr. Geronimo Piatti, who had charge of the novices sent from the noviciate of Sant' Andréa to spend some time in the Professed House of the Gesù. He had already met Aloysius on his arrival in Rome, and only five days after the young man had entered the noviciate, Piatti wrote to Mutius Vitelleschi then at Naples, how much he was impressed by him and his history. Three months later Aloysius was sent to the Gesù, and there Piatti questioned him very closely about his vocation, and immediately noted down what he heard. Probably he meant to do no more than this, for he called his notes : ' Vocation of Aloysius Gonzaga to the Society of Jesus.' However, he continued to add details concerning the first part of the young man's noviciate, but left off before he went to Naples, 1586, and after some time handed over his notes to Fr. Virgilio Cepari. He, in the year 1589, when he was actually living with Aloysius, continued to note down facts of which he was eye-witness, and things that he had induced Aloysius by means, owns he, ' of pious stratagems,' to say. For naturally Aloysius disliked talking about himself and made the least of everything. (Apparently he only spoke freely when he felt exceptionally happy, as, for instance, just after taking his vows.) Cepari therefore completed a ' life ' up to a year and a half before the Saint's death, having woven into his work all that Piatti had written. This little book, needless to say, he suppressed, or showed it only to a very few, lest its existence should come to the Saint's ears. Piatti is, however, for this part, an earlier source than Cepari.

After the death of Aloysius, Bellarmine, who had read the manuscript, implored him to finish it, and add that part of Aloysius's life which was omitted—namely, his diplomatic mission to Mantua to the end. But Cepari was overwhelmed just then with business, and put all his documents into the hands of Fr. Giovanni Antonio Valtrino, who had arrived from Sicily to be one of the Society's chroniclers: he, though he had not known Aloysius, developed a great devotion towards him, and accumulated a vast amount of material, so that it became clear that the whole book must be recast. Valtrino, however, died before this could be undertaken; and his 'life,' of which the original manuscript has been lost, but which exists in three copies, has quite recently been printed for the first time by Fr. A. M. Fiocchi, S.J.: but as it contains nothing that is not in the later work by Cepari, or in the Acts of canonization, it need not be quoted.

About twelve years after the death of Aloysius, Claudius Acquaviva, then General of the Society, desired Cepari to produce a proper Life, which he forthwith set to work upon, writing at Brescia, so as to be near the places mentioned and to be able to solve doubts at his ease. He had, first, gone to every one of the Italian cities in which the Saint had lived, and was free to consult not only ordinary persons who had known him, but his tutor, del Turco, many members of his family, and in particular his mother. He caused a very great number of official 'processes' to be drawn up, added information from Spain and France, had his book examined not only by the Society, but by Dominican, Capuchin, Benedictine and finally by pontifical censors, and in 1606 it was printed.

The Life forthwith became classical, dedicated as it was by the author to: 'The Most Illustrious and Most Excellent Signor Don Francis Gonzaga, Prince of the Empire, Marquis of Castiglione, Medole, etc., Chamberlain, Privy Councillor and Ambassador of His Imperial Majesty to H.H. Pope Paul IV.' Cepari begs permission to publish it 'from His

Excellency,' 'to whom I present and give it.' He does so, not only because of the kinship between Francis and his elder brother Aloysius, but because Francis strives to imitate Aloysius in his virtues. Indeed the bishop of Mantua has affirmed that Francis and the Princess have done as much for his diocese, by their holy government of their territories, as he could do himself. With further protestations of humility, Cepari ends. Francis not only, of course, accepted the Life, but wrote another introductory letter in order to offer it to the Pope, Paul V, recalling that Clement VIII had already pressed him to have it published though he had meant at first to keep it as a private and family possession. The letter ends with a very urgent request that the Pope should accede to the petitions of all the members of the House of Gonzaga, and of its subjects, and of many Christian Princes, and hurry on his brother's canonization so much as possible.

I do not think that anything substantial is to be drawn from sources other than this Life and the Acts of Canonization with the Notes and Additions made by the Bollandists, all of which I have read so carefully as possible. Anything else that I have used, has served rather for decoration than for direct information concerning Aloysius. Still, I think that he cannot possibly be understood, if his family, its history and temperament, be not tolerably understood, and also, the environment in which he lived. It must be recalled that Cepari wrote when many persons, concerned in Aloysius's career, or at least their children, were still alive : he trod on fires crusted with the thinnest ash. I would wish, also, since the whole point of Aloysius's career, and therefore of his biographies, seems to be the help of those who will be the adult Catholics of the next generation, that the book should appeal to the imagination too, and I have not shrunk from making it so pictorial as possible. But while I hope not to have inserted any detail for which there is not evidence, it is out of the question to catalogue the sources of such minutiae.

That the Church has intended, and most definitely still

intends, that Aloysius should receive the cult of the young, lies quite outside of argument. Even in his life-time, it was noticed that he got on very well with young men, and this was in fact one of his motives for joining the Society which attended so much to their needs, and he was even urged by a superior to ask for life precisely in view of the multitudes of young men whom he might encounter. Aloysius answered that he could do them more good from heaven. In June, 1725, Benedict XIII proclaimed Aloysius patron of all Jesuit schools; and in 1729 he was declared special patron of all students throughout the world. Leo XIII, especially at the time of the tercentenary of Aloysius's death (1891), insisted on the same point: and the present Holy Father, Pius XI, has left no doubt at all, by means of many speeches and writings, that he wills that Aloysius should be regarded as uniquely powerful on behalf of young men and boys, and as their quite special patron. In an official Letter addressed to the Father General of the Society of Jesus, June 13th, 1926, during the festivities that commemorated the bicentenary of the canonization of SS. Stanislaus and Aloysius, he makes it clear that he considers the death of Aloysius to have occurred (as human estimate would have it) so cruelly soon, simply because had he lived longer there would have been no special reason for regarding him as patron of *youth* particularly. He begins his letter by recalling how dearly the Church, ever since the example set by her divine Founder, has loved and cared for childhood and youth, and how intensely he is himself preoccupied with their welfare. Watching the thousands of young men who came to Rome during the Holy Year, he felt that, if they fulfilled their promise, there was nothing that they might not do in life: but for that, they needed both a model and a help, and that they would find it nowhere better than in St. Aloysius—that is, he insists here as elsewhere, 'if they study Aloysius in his true light and such as he truly is, which is very different from the lying portrait into which the enemies of the Church and, even, less judicious biographers have distorted him.' And he concludes his Letter thus:

'We therefore, moved by that keen anxiety that more than anyone else We feel for the perfect education and salvation of young men, especially in times like ours, when youth is exposed to the greatest dangers, and also in gratitude for favours already received, and again, in order to obtain benefits yet more generous from Aloysius, We, then, treading in the path of Our Predecessors, especially Benedict XIII and Leo XIII, solemnly confirm, and where it befits, with Our Apostolic Authority we declare, that Saint Aloysius Gonzaga is to be the celestial patron of the whole of Christian Youth in its entirety. . . . So We earnestly exhort and with fatherly affection entreat young men to hold Aloysius ever present as model, and never to cease venerating and invoking him.'

The words used by the Pontiff to encourage the putting of Aloysius in his 'true light,' encouraged too if they did not actually provoke a flood of apologetic literature. I have read some of it, as well as some of what it combats. I do not propose to quote any of it. I think it suffices to state the facts of Aloysius's life, adding what may serve to make his period intelligible, in order to make his life itself intelligible. Hence, I hope to moralize but little, and to interpret words and actions quite simply according to the motives I believe he had when speaking or doing them, but even preferably according to their own interpretation of themselves. I confess that a man, especially a young man, of a Latin race, needs no little explanation to a northerner, just as a northerner would require a very great deal indeed, if a southerner were to understand him. I confess too that a young man of the sixteenth century, whether English or Italian, would require more explanation to a young man of our own day, than an Italian under Sixtus V would to an English lad under Elizabeth: for the similarity between gentlemen of north and south was then far greater, I think, than it is now; but far more violent still is the difference in entire outlook, in every instinct, between an Italian prince of the late

Renaissance and perhaps even of to-day, and the average British schoolboy or University man or working-lad of to-day.¹ So, if St. Aloysius Gonzaga is to be received by them as patron—that is, as help and model—with any conviction, he will need a certain amount of explanation. But, as I said, I think I will keep such study of his interior life as I shall venture on, almost for the end, when, returning from Mantua to Rome, he felt himself at last and perhaps for the first time really free, and able to expand his soul at ease, and absolved from the obligation of fighting any more. Any direct application of his principles to our own day, I will reserve for a brief Epilogue, lest our attention to and appreciation of the Saint's personality be interfered with thereby.

I conclude by praying a Saint, who has always been dear to me, and to whom I am grateful beyond measure, to prevent me from inserting in this book any merely personal ideas, any subjective interpretations that are not warranted by the truth; and I ask him to further a difficult task, for the difficulty of which, after all, it is he who is responsible. . . . The principles however of Christian heroism are eternal, and in a sense the conditions in which the Christian life has to be lived are enduring (for what more lasting than Satan, and the flesh?); I trust therefore, within the accidentals of time and place, to indicate, with his help, what shall make young men who may read this story wish to ask him for friendly help in their own circumstances, sure that he will understand them, and be experienced indeed to succour them.

Reliquum est, ut Deo primum gratias agamus, quod nostris

¹ Why, even an anti-clerical paper of Rome was lost in amazement at the sight of some well-bred Roman lads holding alms-dishes in the Church of Sant' Ignazio during the Aloysian celebrations of 1891. "Such courage . . . is certainly not to be found among our own sons." I don't think a young northerner would require much courage to do that, or much more! He might be delighted to be of use, or regard it as a joke, or a bore; or take it for granted that this small service must be done, if it be asked for. But he would not expect the Rationalist Press to exclaim at, and enshrine in print, his *courage*!

diebus tam insignem lucernam ardentem et lucentem accenderit ; deinde ut hoc tam praeclarum lumen iugiter attendentes, ipsum sequamur in hoc itinere caliginoso ; denique ipsum etiam pie invocemus . . . ut eius intercessione, quo ipse praecessit, ipsi quoque perveniamus. Amen. B. Robert Bellarmine.

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The Archives of Mantua are still in process of being superbly edited : they contain many facsimiles of autographs of the Gonzagas. Bertolotti seems exhaustive as regards his subject :

the curious incident of the English engraver Benjamin Wright is to be read of there: he was employed by the Gonzaga Cardinals in 1611 in Rome: he signed himself in Italian *Ruit*, and wrote at times such atrocious Italian that it has to be assumed he was then drunk. There is a most curious 'Appeal to the British People and to the Press,' by His S. Highness Prince Alexander di Gonzaga, 'calling himself Duke of Mantua,' sent here and printed in 1856: A headline—'Occupy—To steal: Austrian Diplomatic Dictionary,' shows sufficiently its matter and its style. Books like Tacchi-Venturi's *First Century of the Society of Jesus in Italy*, Vols. 1 and 2: Pastor's *Lives of the Popes*: Burckhardt's *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*: and *Italian Social Customs of the 16th Century*, T. F. Crane, Yale University Press, are of course throughout invaluable. I have ventured to repeat a few sentences from the Catholic Truth Society pamphlet *Life of St. Aloysius*, especially in the earlier sections. I have of course consulted Prof. Iozzi's edition of St. Aloysius's *Letters*, and even have quoted what he printed there. But since this priest is well-known to have forged various documents, what he quotes as St. Aloysius's letters *may* be forgeries, though the arguments this way or that do not seem to me conclusive. Hence I reproduce them only with this warning, given both here, and on each several occasion of quoting.

I much regret that Mr. S. Brinton's *The Gonzaga, Lords of Mantua* (Methuen) was published too late for me to consult; and also, that I forgot to mention in the text that St. Aloysius's cousin, Vincent, Duke of Mantua, with whom he negotiated the succession of Solferino, was the murderer of James Crichton, the "Admirable Crichton" of our proverb.

PART I

I am a piece of twisted iron : I entered religion to get twisted straight,—
ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA.

CHAPTER I

THE POISONED FIELD

*Stemmata quid faciunt ? quid prodest, Pontice, longo
Sanguine censerì, pictos ostendere uultus*

Maiorum . . .

Si male vivitur ?

Tota licet ueteres exponant undique ceras

Atria, nobilitas sola est atque unica virtus.

Juvenal : viii,

I

THE voice of Vergil, singing sadly of his home, and of the Mincio that floats wide into lakes round Mantua, was in itself enough to make those names for ever musical and unforgotten. Still, Mantua long ago had strength worthy to set Ravenna and the Lombard fighting for it—and tales reach us, like voices through the mist, of a distant chief who should have come over the Alps from the north, to build a castle destined to be called Gonzaga. Others will have it that the Gongiungi, a Lombard clan, settled their home there. Bishops thereafter ruled there ; then the Marquis of Canossa, then the Dukes of Lorraine held Mantua, and in 1113 it passed to the Countess Matilda of Tuscany, and among her vassals the Gonzagas definitely emerge and their name recurs in her deeds of gift, as in those in favour of monastic centres, in 1114 and 1116. By 1260, along with their kinsmen, the Bonacolsi, the Gonzagas were buying lands that they were always to hold, and their aggrandisement continued till they took their leap towards magnificence in the year 1328.

In that year, a revolt of the Mantuans against their Captain, Rinaldo de' Bonacolsi, was engineered by his brother-in-law, Luigi Gonzaga, with the help of 800 infantry and 300 cavalry secretly obtained from Can Grande della Scala, lord of Verona. Rinaldo, Captain since 1273, was murdered, his people

declared enemies and traitors, and Luigi was proclaimed Captain, Perpetual General, and Lord of Mantua. Can Grande, who had really hoped to win Mantua for himself, got nothing but a sum of money for his pains, which he used very wisely for fortifications. Meanwhile the castle of Mantua, begun in 1302, grew gradually under the Gonzagas into one of the vastest buildings of all Europe, and was even now lifting its terrific towers into a very cliff against siege.

Luigi was no ill ruler. At any rate he went from strength to strength, and Ludwig of Bavaria named him Imperial Vicar and sovereign of Mantua, Cremona, Asola and Reggiolo, and in 1339 Benedict XII confirmed his lordship over Mantua. By 1340 he could send 1,500 horse and 17,000 foot against Parma, and in 1342, 2,000 horse to Pisa against Florence. His chief enemies were the Visconti of Milan, and the Scaligers and even the Este of Ferrara, and against these he found himself arrayed in 1348, because his grandson Ugolino had seduced, they said, Luchino Visconti's wife, Isabella de' Fieschi, who in any case poisoned her husband two years later. Luigi married thrice, the third time when he was 72, on the very day on which his son Corradino and his grandson Ugolino married. The three brides entered Mantua together in great triumph. He died in 1360, aged 92.

This was about the time when Bernabò Visconti was proclaiming that he was king, emperor, and pope in his own territory ; that not even God should issue orders there without his permission ; was burning Dominicans for rebuking his wholesale massacres ; quartering his five thousand dogs on citizens or friars whom he flogged to death if the dogs went sick ; making papal messengers eat the parchment the Pope had written on—the silk strings that bound it and the leaden seals that sealed it. Yet, amid horrors like these, a St. Catherine of Siena was alive, a girl of but twenty when she would walk by the side of brigands led to execution, while men with pincers tore from them scarlet rags of flesh ; and she could soothe the poor wretches into peace, or would hold the head of the lad upon the scaffold till the axe fell,

and her white dress was deluged with his blood ; and she could see, in her ecstasy, the soul of the poor boy turning round, even at heaven's gate, to smile to and thank the Saint who had opened those gates to him. Pest stalked the land ; four-fifths of the population of Florence and of Siena died of it, and Boccaccio was drugging panic with his licentious stories, and Petrarch, great client of Gonzaga, was singing the Triumph of Death..

Luigi's son Guido (1360-1369) used the disastrously handsome Ugolino as his assistant in the Captaincy of Mantua. Hence Ugolino was hated by his two brothers, Lodovico and Francesco. On October 14th, 1362, he asked them both to dinner. Lodovico came, but said that Francesco was occupied. Later, Francesco arrived, and stabbed the unsuspecting Ugolino, yet without killing him. Ugolino staggered towards Lodovico, who finished him off with his sword. Lies bought the murderers' absolution from Rome and the goodwill of Charles IV, the Emperor, and they became associated with their father in his Vicariate. But Cansignoria della Scala persuaded Bernabò Visconti to revive the ancient feud, on the grounds that Guido, who had married Caterina Visconti (also Beatrice of Lorraine) had not avenged the death, and Mantua was invaded. However, a truce was arranged, and the Emperor himself came to stay there, and in return for the munificence of the Gonzaga hospitality assured to Guido the rights over the Bonacolsi possessions and the three bars *sable* on a field *or* that were the original arms of the Gonzagas, to which he added the ancient coat of the kings of Bohemia, a crowned and collared lion, passing in silver on a blood-red shield.

Francesco died : and in 1370 Lodovico succeeded as third Captain General of Mantua, and held his post till 1382. He married Aida, daughter of Obizzo d'Este of Ferrara, and assigned to his son Francesco, Agnes, daughter of Bernabò Visconti, whom Francesco, aged 14, brought home as his bride half-crushed beneath her jewels. Let others, Austria was later on to be bidden, exalt themselves by war : ' Tu,

felix Austria, nube ! ' And these marriages certainly began to send the Gonzaga fortunes soaring. Lodovico built, fortified, and married. Prosperity, under him, was great. Francesco, the heir, was not acclaimed till 1386, though by now Mantua was really a hereditary lordship. He was the first Gonzaga who went on the diplomatic tours that Royalty has always wisely loved : during his absence his wife, Agnes, gave him cause to behead her, which he did on February 7th, 1381, killing her lover that same night in prison. Sure, thereupon, of the renewed hostility of the Visconti, he betrothed himself at once to Margherita Malatesta, at Rimini, and at Bologna, joined a league against the Visconti, that is, against Gian Galeazzo, murderer and successor of Bernabò, and founder of Milan Cathedral. Gian Galeazzo indeed appeared to be aiming at the reduction of all Italy into the Visconti's power : it seemed possible that the Gonzagas were doomed : indeed, under the foreseen pretext that Agnes' death must be avenged, Gian Galeazzo tried to dam the Mincio and deprive Mantua of its watery ramparts. However, the dam broke ; and in 1393 the League could safely be dissolved. The Gonzagas had survived even the Visconti. Thereupon the marriage with the Malatesta heiress was completed : the Emperor Wenceslaus made Francesco Marquis of Mantua with right to name his successors, even bastards, if he had no sons that were legitimate. The honour, however, involved too great an expense in men and money, and for the time it was declined. None the less, the territories of the Gonzaga house were becoming vast, and Francesco created a new Commune, *Lonato*, which included *Castiglione*, *Castel Goffredo*, *Medole*, *Guidizzolo*, and *Solferino*. He died in 1407.

His son, Gianfrancesco, fourth Captain General, married, at sixteen, Paolo Malatesta, daughter of the Lord of Brescia. At the wedding joust, forty-two knights, all of them Gonzagas, fought. ¹ It would be out of place to describe his military

¹ It was Carlo Malatesta, his uncle, who during the boy's minority, knocked down the statue of Vergil in the Mantuan market-place, to which the citizens, he said, were like to pay idolatrous worship. Its

services, which were great. The Pope, John XXIII, made him his Captain General in 1412; and stayed with him for a month (Jan. 17th—Feb. 15th) in 1414, investing him with all manner of fiefs. Even the Republic of Venice showered gifts upon him; while Sigismund, king of the Romans, then Emperor, made Mantua an Imperial Fief, and named Gianfrancesco Marquis. In 1433 Sigismund, crowned by now, stayed at Mantua, had a great throne erected before the Cathedral, and before the throne, an altar. Mass was celebrated; and amid processions of incredible splendour he actually conferred the promised marquisate, and the four black Eagles begin thenceforward to flap their wings on the Gonzaga shield. Moreover the Emperor announced to the startled Luigi, eldest son of Gianfrancesco, that he should marry his own niece, Barbara Hohenzollern of Brandenburg, and the marriage did indeed take place in November, Luigi being nineteen, Barbara twelve. Gianfrancesco being now Prince of the Empire and Permanent Imperial Vicar, the possessions of his rapacious house were duly regularized. None the less, it was he who began the fall of the Gonzagas, for not only was he weakened by war, but he divided his enormous possessions among his four sons, and this inaugurated those branches of the Gonzagas, which, because of their mutual hatreds and also because they took different sides in the struggles between France, Italy, Spain and the Emperor, sapped the unity of the clan.

Luigi succeeded him in 1414. It was he who showed to the full the extraordinary mixture of qualities that signalize this period. His long reign—he died in 1478—was remarkable far more for the arts of peace than for war, though he earned the grim title of *Il Turco*. He had venerated, as master, Vittorino da Feltre, established henceforward at Mantua. In 1459, Pius II placed in that city the Diet that should discuss measures against the Turks, and arrived there with

head was recovered and reached Vespasian Gonzaga, see p. 16, and subsided, from his collection, into the city museum in 1785. A statue of Vergil has quite recently been re-erected there.

twenty-six Cardinals whose horses—some of them had as many as 300—strained the resources even of the Gonzaga stables. 150,000 persons are said to have flowed, with the papal progress, into the surroundings of the swampy town. The Pope left on January 19th, 1460, sailing down the Mincio in a Bucentor, one of those superb palace-boats that the Gonzagas ever loved to possess. Twenty-six great barges accompanied the Pontiff. As reward for this visit, the Marquis's second son, Francesco, aged seventeen, was made the first Gonzaga Cardinal. Impossible to describe the magnificence of the buildings erected by the Gonzaga Turk. He developed too the agriculture of the territory; and was munificent to Letters, and had three printing presses. Platina, Poliziano, Pico della Mirandola, Alberti, Mantegna, were welcomed there: the last-named left the brutal portrait of the Marquis on the superbly frescoed walls of his palace, and painted that scenery for the plays to which the Gonzagas were already showing an almost insane devotion, that is now at Hampton Court. As for Poliziano, he wrote in three days the *Orfeo* which was performed at the state entry of Cardinal Francesco into Mantua in 1472. The climax came when Sixtus IV sent him the Golden Rose which was usually given to no one but to Royalty. Alas, in 1478 a plague of locusts visited the land. Luigi organized bands of men to destroy them: they did so to such purpose that a plague was born from the rotting masses, and, with thousands of his subjects, the Marquis died.

The third Marquis, Federico, had an exceedingly military career, and even in 1482 united, in the company of nearly all the other great princes, with Ferrara against Venice, who, in her turn, seemed to be wanting to get all Italy into her power. It was he, however, who built that Palace of Delights at Marmirolo, near Mantua, which for its rich beauties rivalled, and eclipsed, the palaces of kings. But his wisest act, perhaps, was to marry his son Francesco to Isabella d'Este of Ferrara, then aged nine. Francesco succeeded him in 1484, and once more the Gonzaga glory soared.

From the historian's point of view, presumably the war

with the French in which he fought, and the very bloody battle at Fornovo near the river Taro, and even Francesco's imprisonment by the Venetians during which Isabella proved herself an extremely competent all-but-official Regent, should be dwelt upon. I cannot here do so : moreover, it was this wise tyrant's desire to maintain that neutrality among states, which could but be, rather, a neutralization of tugging forces, in the midst of whose vibrant strain he should find himself at rest. At one and the same time, he found himself Captain General of Maximilian's Imperial Forces, Captain, or Gonfalonier of the Church by the creation of Julius II, Captain too to the French King, and for the Venetian Republic ! Already in the earlier days of his reign, he had made those incognito journeys, accompanied by a mere handful of companions, through Venice, Milan, Florence, Rome, Naples, that he might learn men and things. He married one of his sisters to Guidobaldo of Urbino, and another to a Sforza, each with a dowry of 27,000 ducats. A certain personal economizing and cutting down of staff had prefaced his enormous expenditures, and he was able to establish a police within the city which was wholly citizen, and, by his creation of official—well, pawn-shops, ' Mounts of Piety '—throughout Mantua, rescued the people somewhat from the local Jews. The high rate of their usury is said to be estimable by the fact that his own papally-approved rate of 10 per cent. per annum was the salvation of the folk. In 1484, the population of Mantua was 128,000, of whom 32,000 were within the city. Moreover, a percentage of all produce was to be brought into the town and there sold at possible prices.

On a basis of this prudence, combined with his alliance with the Este who were now again and again his kinsfolk, Francesco, handsome, huge, affable, magnificent, became one of the finest despots of the age. It was an age of precious stones, but his jewels are among those we read of as out-blazing the treasures of kings. He had the cult of horses : he wooed the friendship of the Sultan that he might get rare breeds : his stables were filled with horses not only from

Naples, Sicily, Spain, but from Thrace, Cilicia, Arabia; and England would apply to him for excellent steeds. But besides these, animals of all sorts were being sent for. Tyrants loved to have lions' dens, these beasts being kept for splendour, for due intimidation of the populace (nor did you need to be a child to quail when you heard them roar at night), and because the despots rather hoped that they themselves would be thought not unlike the lions. Popes, on visiting a city, would be entertained by the sight of lion-fights, as when Pius II visited Florence, though unfortunately on that occasion (1459) the lions refused to fight the medley of dogs, boars, horses, bulls and a giraffe, that was sent into the arena. Emanuel of Portugal presented Leo X with a rhinoceros and an elephant; and when the elephant died, its portrait was duly painted and elegies written on it. Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, as might be expected, went further, and had a human menagerie, of all manner of Tartar bowmen, Indian divers, Negro wrestlers and other strange by-products of inexplicable Nature, and it was they who carried his body to the grave, mingling their guttural or strident outcries with the funeral plain-chant.

Had Francesco needed stimulus, he would have got it from the Estes of Ferrara. Nothing, to our tamed modern mind, seems more of a nightmare than the alliance in these great despots of tigerish bloodthirstiness, with delicate appreciation of arts; of almost insane immoralities, with faith and even devotion. They were children, grown-up, and very strong, but with all the naughtiness, loveliness, terrific inexperience, slyness, intuition, noisiness, passion for making as for breaking things, mania for dressing up, for pretending and then believing in their own pretence, of exuberant, imaginative, giant children. The Estes could be as proud of Dante's invective, as of having Petrarch as guest-friend, and of producing that 'second glory' of the land, Ariosto. A court poet will praise Niccolò d'Este for his 800 mistresses, since thereby he bade fair to emulate Solomon; yet it was Niccolò who made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and waited to

dub his followers knights till he could do so in the Holy Sepulchre after Mass ; on his way home, in Cyprus, showed that he could draw past his ear a mighty bow that none other could stir ; and swore to God, our Lady, St. George and the peacocks they were eating, that he would fast each Friday till he were the first to break lance against the foe. This is that Niccolò who beheaded in one night his son and his second wife, for their guilt, and then raved through the corridors of Ferrara, gnawing his sceptre, and shrieking the lady's name. His son Borso made the Ferrara age of gold. He was created Duke of Modena and Reggio by the Emperor Frederick Habsburg, in person ; Aeneas Silvio Piccolomini, then bishop of Siena and afterwards Pope, preached the sermon to the praise of the House of Este, and when Borso entered Modena, a pageant met him—the local Saint, with angels, in one car ; the four Cardinal Virtues, dressed like Venus, in another. At Reggio, angels on a revolving platform bade San Prospero, the city's patron, hand over keys and sceptre to the Duke, and Justice, on another chariot, wherein rode Numa, Cato, Regulus and Cincinnatus, made speeches proving how Borso surpassed Cæsar in clemency, Octavianus in prudence, Trajan in justice. Saracens, or unicorns (Borso's badge) drew yet other cars : from the west front of the Duomo, St. Peter floated down and crowned him ; on two lofty columns stood Idolatry and Faith (a lovely girl), and at her exhortation the rival column fell and was shattered. Caesar then with seven nymphs, the Seven Virtues, appeared, and Borso was bidden pursue them ; and, having prayed long before the altar, he was hailed as ' Mirror of Christians, Sole Delight of Mortals, The World's Most Worthy Rose.' Aeneas Silvio, who visited him, wrote that the Ferrarese worshipped him almost as God, and indeed our bewilderment reaches its climax when we see that the people did indeed adore these tyrants till they murdered them—tyrants scarcely one of whom seemed born in wedlock, and who wrung from the poor those farthings that they tossed back to them as ducats. The people must have lived in a frantic, disconnected dream,

through which moved processions wherein strutted lynxes, civet-cats and panthers, ostriches and long-eared Syrian goats, amid fluttering parrots and flaunting peacocks and fretful porcupines. When they heard of the glories of last night's feast, where white and lilac flowers made arches over the tables and rose-petals dropped from golden ceilings, they knew too that in the slimy dungeons beneath those floors languished the sons and the mistresses who but awaited the fall of axe or the strangling rope.

Excommunications alternated with receptions at Rome that rivalled Jubilees, as when Paul II summoned Borso to Rome to make him Duke, a summons that he obeyed the more eagerly since his one wish was to receive Communion at the Pope's hands before he died. Seventeen Cardinals, led by Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga, came out to meet him at the gates, and all Italy flocked to see the processions to and from the city. It was his half-brother, Hercules, whose daughter Isabella married Francesco. Hercules had himself married Leonora of Aragon, daughter of the king of Naples; and his second daughter, Beatrice d'Este, having married the Sforza of Milan, another Sforza, whose first wife, Maddelena Gonzaga, had died in childbirth, married Lucrezia Borgia, the Pope's daughter, so that all the ruling houses were by now cousins, and the red bull of the Borgias came trampling through the lilies of the Estes, and Ippolito, a son of Hercules, was made, aged eight, Archbishop of Esztergom in Hungary, and Cardinal at fourteen, by Alexander VI, now Pope. Yet the older Hercules was a man of all but maniac devotion, suddenly impassioned of Savonarola (himself a Ferrarese), and desperate in his attempts to reform the territory; and ecstatic nuns of the Este house—more than one of its members was beatified—were held to be re-incarnations of St. Catherine of Siena, lived with hands and feet that bled with stigmata, and lashed the guilty churchmen of the day in prophetic words. Cruel to relate the biting humiliation of the aged Duke, when Alexander bade him marry his son Alfonso to Lucrezia, whose first two marriages had been annulled, while

Cesare Borgia had strangled her third husband, whom she loved, in prison. Hercules fought hard, succumbed, and with mad revels Lucrezia was married, by proxy, in Rome, aged twenty-one. She was then brought to Ferrara, where the most magnificent woman, after the bride, was Isabella Gonzaga, come from Mantua to meet her. Soon after this, the Pope died, and the star of the Estes hurried to its setting. But the Gonzaga constellation shone, for a while, brighter and brighter still.

At first the affairs of Federico, the next Marquis of Mantua, 1519-1540, were involved. The king of France's rage at being postponed to Charles V as next Emperor, had been the origin of many miseries for Italy. Leo X sided with Charles, and Federico was Captain of the Church. So he found himself fighting against his kinsmen the Gonzaga lord of Bozzolo,¹ his cousin of Urbino, and his uncle Alfonso d'Este who went with Venice. Charles, who was crowned Emperor by the Pope at Bologna in 1530, went to Germany by way of Mantua, where he stayed March 25th—April 19th. There he created Federico first Duke of Mantua, and gave him the words *Fides*, and (in Greek lettering) *Olympos*, over the heavenly mountain and the star, to set on the summit of his coat of arms. On October 31st, 1531, partly in view of the insistent complaints of the influence of Isabel Boschetti in his house, he married Margherita Palaeologa, sister of the dead Mary of Monferrato. Half the princes of Italy were courting her, in hopes of inheriting thus that very important district: but her mother, Anne d'Alençon, was fond of Federico, and gave him her

¹ Bozzolo began as little more than a group of cottages belonging to a kind of farming estate governed by Benedictine monks. Towards 1000 it came under the rule of the Este and then of other families until in 1334 handed itself over to the Gonzagas. The Gonzagas, the Viscontis, the Cavalcabos and others proceeded to fight for it till 1425, when it definitely became a Gonzaga town and in 1594 was proclaimed a "city" under Rodolfo II, brother of St. Aloysius. The Gonzagas held it till 1746, when it passed over to the House of Austria which paid an annual tribute for it to the Gonzagas. It became part of Italy once more in 1866. Even now, it is "no mean city," and the fourteenth century tower, prominent in old prints, still rises in dignified simplicity over the austere palace where once the Gonzagas lived.

daughter. After disgraceful intrigues, Margherita was assigned the fief, and strange new charges appeared on the superimposed escutcheon of the Gonzagas—the double-headed imperial eagle straddled in gold upon a red field, since the Palaeologi were akin to the Eastern Emperors: the Cross of Jerusalem shone golden—heraldry's one great anomaly—upon silver, since the family was linked, too, with the king of the Holy City; the Aragon arms, by way of Monferrato, and those of Casale there, added more gold and red and white to the flamboyant shield; the white fishes of the Princes of Samos and the Dukes of Bari swam in their azure sea; the Thessalian golden cross on its red ground came also from the Palaeologi. The green bend sloped over its bars of gold and black and recalled Saxony, an ancient asset of the Gonzagas themselves.¹ Francesco was the patron of Baldassare Castiglione of whom I speak below, and who thus became a thorough Mantuan. After the death of his mother, Isabella, who had been his true guiding-star, Federico shut himself up in Marmirolo, but soon enough followed her, and died on June 28th, 1540. His son and successor was aged but eight. He was Duke for ten years only, having fallen from a boat while shooting on a Mantuan lake, and catching pneumonia. Yet his short reign was noticeable owing to the wise regency of his uncle Cardinal Hercules and another uncle, Ferrante Gonzaga, who as Master of Waters and Edifices changed the face of the city, still liable to be flooded owing to its ill-managed river and low unequal streets. Moreover, Charles V, after an interview with Paul IV, married him to Catherine of Austria, daughter of his brother Ferdinand, king of the Romans. But since this brings us to the world of St. Aloysius's father, I leave mention here of the next Duke, William, till later.

¹ The Gonzaga coat is fully described and annotated on p. 58 of Vol. II of the Archivio.

II

The practice of dividing lands among sons began, as I said, the ramifications of the Gonzaga clan. It was Rodolfo, son of Luigi Gonzaga the Turk, who inaugurated that of Castiglione. Lord of Castiglione, Solferino and Castel Goffredo, he was made prince of the Holy Roman Empire by Emperor Sigismund in 1493. He was a good soldier, and died heroically at Fornovo. But his married life was troubled: he beheaded his first wife Antonia Malatesta, and his second, Caterina, sister of the enigmatic Platonist, Pico della Mirandola, was afterwards strangled by two of her young ladies. Rodolfo was followed by Aloysius Alexander, who also married twice. He was a fierce old warrior, and fought, first, for the Duke of Urbino, whom he was afterwards accused of poisoning. Certainly he joined hands with the assassins of Pier Luigi Farnese. By 1521 he was fighting against the French with Federico Duke of Mantua, and was injured in leg and eye, acquiring thus the nickname of the Limper-Squinter. By 1526, he was fighting with the Venetians against the Emperor and by 1556, on the Emperor's side. He settled then in Castel Goffredo and fortified and beautified it and showed a burly goodwill towards his vassals. The roughness of his single-handed combats in the jousting-field was appalling, yet had for complement an appreciation of the arts, and a kind of grim humour showing itself partly in his fondness for proverbs. On the gable of his palace he inscribed: 'My Strength is my People's Love and the Respect of Men that are Mightier,' and as his chronicler has to state that no monument of any sort was put up to him by his 'true and grateful servants,' he is free to conclude that Aloysius Alexander had just so many living monuments as there were hearts of men who had known him. This genial old ruffian, who, with his surging Gonzaga temperament had thought of everything during his campaigns save death, felt, as the end drew near, that he really should attend to it a little. So he had a great lead coffin made, covered with black leather and brocade, and into

this he used to get and lay himself down, in order to practise what it would feel like to get into it for the last time of all. Over his tomb he wrote: 'Since but a name on earth is Aloysius, trusting in God's Mercy, under the protection of Cæsar and of the holy Empire, and of the Most Serene Lord of the Venetians, and in the heart of his dear People, Here Aloysius Gonzaga, Marquis, willed to rest, who never rested while alive.' At his death, a new division gave Solferino to his second son Horace, who had no children, and Castel Goffredo to his third, Alfonso, who was destined to have but daughters, so the three places were bound to reunite, and his eldest son, Ferrante, who owned in his lifetime Castiglione alone, could foresee that his sons would accumulate once more these fiefs.

I find it difficult not to think that Ferrante, whose chief faults were ambition and a mania for gambling, failed to find both material assistance and example from his kinsman Vespasian Gonzaga of Sabionetta. Had it not been for the exquisite character of his wife, whom he sincerely loved, and had so great an influence on her eldest son at least, I think Ferrante's history, even spiritual, might have been a more accurate parallel to that of the Sabionetta Duke. Aloysius indeed was afterwards to suggest Vespasian as a suitable man to whom his harassed family might turn in their anxieties.

Sabionetta, towards the end of the eighth century was given by Charlemagne to the Benedictine monks of Leno. Taken from them in 924 and given to the bishop of Parma, the Benedictines regained it in January, 958. After the fall of the Bonacolsi, it passed to Luigi Gonzaga, captain of the Mantuans, but in 1361 Guido Gonzaga yielded it to Bernabo Visconti: however in 1429 the Senate of Venice gave it to Giant Francesco Gonzaga in recognition of the services rendered to Venice by the Gonzaga alliance. He left it to his second son, Charles, whose brother and heir Lodovico obtained his regular investiture from the emperor Frederick. He was succeeded by Gianfrancesco, Lodovico, and Luigi, who married Isabella Colonna, and their son Vespasian it

was who exalted the little state to a high pitch of magnificence and renaissance culture. He was educated by his aunt, Julia Colonna : was page at the court of Charles V, and appointed viceroy of Valencia by Philip II of Spain, and was moreover made by him commander in chief of his Italian infantry with a yearly pay of 1,500 gold scudi. During his brief periodical absences from battle-fields, he succeeded in transforming almost as a magician might the melancholy lands around the rock of Sabionetta, and the town itself till it became a ' little Athens.' This extraordinary man not only insisted on the advance of education, but supervised it himself, was present at the classes and even corrected exercises. He even opened a Hebrew printing press, and it was considered a miracle that the Inquisition tolerated it, for Vespasian was still quite young. However, in 1477 he obtained from the emperor Rodolfo II that Sabionetta should become a Duchy, ' confirmed in its freedom from all dependence, with its own laws and army, and should find in the sole Emperor, not a patron, but a protector.' Venice placed him among her nobles ; and the emperor gave him the title of Highness, which, with a proud modesty, he refused to make use of.

This brilliant prince was miserable. He assassinated the man whom he thought to be the lover of his young wife Diana di Cardona, and her he poisoned. He married again, Anne of Aragon, a Spanish royalty, who, two years after the birth of a son, mysteriously abandoned her husband and died in sorrow, never revealing its secret source. Vespasian wrote to a friend : ' The state of my mind is most miserable. I am destroying myself. The consolations of my friends are but occasions of torture to me. Of what avail to me the goods of earth, if I lack those of the soul ? I mean, domestic bliss, of my friends. Abroad, honour to my name : in my house, disrespect, by God, and shame ! ' He was driven almost mad by his woes and seemed about to retire from the world in a Servite monastery : but after two months he came out and went off to Monferrato where he served under the standard of the Duke of Mantua. As for his young son, Luigi, he was

riding down the Via Giulia with some friends, saw, or failed to see, his father, and failed in any case to offer him a due salute. Vespasian rebuked him insultingly before them all. The lad—he was only fifteen and high-spirited—answered back. Vespasian kicked him in the groin and caused a rupture of which he died in a few days. Vespasian shut himself up in his misery, became very ill, recovered, and in 1583 married his third wife, Margaret Gonzaga, sister of his kinsman Ferrante Gonzaga of Guastalla, who bore him a son, Antonio. However, the succession went askew, until in 1771 the Duchy was suppressed and Sabionetta was united with Austrian Lombardy.¹ He died on February 26th, 1591, aged fifty-nine, much lamented by his people, and having without any doubt served as model to Ferrante Gonzaga, father of Aloysius. Over his tomb he ordered to be placed the magnificent bronze statue by Leone Leoni who had sculptured the funeral monument of Gian Giacomo de' Medici.

Ferrante, then, had for home the town Castiglione, in a position so exquisite—from its citadel you see the rich Lombard plain, the Lago di Garda and the Alps—that even in 1431 you read : ‘ *Castris in aestivis quod traxit nomen amenis* ’ upon a stone. Thus the engraver thought that the fortress (Castiglione) had added to it the words dello Stiviere, di Stivieri, or delle Stivieri because it was so suited to summer

¹ The little town contains massive relics of its former magnificence, especially its two gates, the *Porta Imperiale* and the *Porta della Vittoria*. The interior of the great ducal palace whose façade occupies an entire street, though much defaced, is still in this room or that incredibly sumptuous : the palaces are full of busts and reliefs and equestrian statues of the Gonzagas, though many have been destroyed : the Museum, of whose classical treasures ‘ even a King of France or of Germany would have been proud ’—and after all, Rodomonte Gonzaga, who collected most of them, did so during the sack of Rome in 1527 in which he took part—has been stripped and its riches sent to Mantua. It was in 1590 that the Olympic theatre, the second of its kind to be built in Italy, was inaugurated : the Palace of the Garden had its own exquisite beauty. Its Mint became famous everywhere, Vespasian using to the full the privilege granted by Maximilian I, in 1497, to Lodovico II Gonzaga, of having his own money coined in all the Gonzaga territories. Andrea Cavalli presided over this mint. After his death, his daughter Isabella Gonzaga and her husband Luigi Carrafa continued their own coinage, but after two more generations the mint was closed.

enjoyment. It was the last name that conquered, and if it be true that in old days the place was celebrated for its fabric of woollen boots, this may have originated the name, since *stiviere* is said to be the same as *stivale*, 'a little boot.' Its relics are Etruscan and Roman: it had had an almost continuous history from A.D. 723 (when its first extant document occurs) till it fell under the influence of the first Luigi Gonzaga and had the hectic series of capture, sale, or exchange proper to all such places till 1445 when Gianfrancesco Gonzaga became definitely its first lord. It was St. Aloysius's grandfather who codified its laws and these served as base for its government till 1796. Ferrante, as I have said, was its first Marquis (1574), and his third son, Francesco, its first prince, after the abdication of Aloysius and the murder of the second son Rodolfo. It was this Francesco who built in 1608 the church to his beatified brother. This church is simple in line, with a dome and a small campanile. The Duomo was not begun till 1761, and stands well, on a tall terrace with cypress trees before it. But the façade projects high above the roof, clothes nothing with its architecture and is a mere, though characteristic, pretence. The church of the Rosary, built by Ferdinand, St. Aloysius's nephew, has an exquisite little porch and door, and serves now, after being closed to the cult, as memorial chapel to those killed in the war. The later history of the place was as dismal as that of most of these Lombard towns. The two sons of Francesco, Luigi and Ferdinand, were minors: Luigi died quite young. It was Gridonia Gonzaga who governed—her very characteristic portrait suggests she was well capable of doing so—for some years. She was one of St. Aloysius's three nieces, the other two being Cintia and Olimpia, of whom Cintia founded the College of Noble Virgins, to which they all withdrew from the ghastly conditions of their time 'to serve God with greater consolation.' The revenues of the ex-College are now, we hear, devoted to the Istituto Gonzaga for the education of working-lads. The citadel was destroyed in 1706 by the French who had taken, were garrisoning it, were attacked by

the imperial troops, but were succoured by Count Medavi, who took it and rased the walls and castle, and of the place in which St. Aloysius was born, only eight stones remain. Ferdinand II, who reigned from 1680 to 1723, was more perverse and corrupt even than the rest ; and, as he favoured France in the war of the Spanish Succession to the detriment of the Empire, was deprived of his glories. On August 5th, 1796, Castiglione was the centre of a battle between the Austrians and the French, and in 1859 Napoleon III on the eve of Solferino, made it his headquarters. But at last the place melted, naturally, into the kingdom of United Italy, and now no one visits it save for the sake of one young man, who left it long ago.

Ferrante, we are assured, was offered the position of Commander-in-Chief to the cavalry of Henry VIII of England : he preferred, naturally, to that exile, the Court of Spain, and did good service to its king. He fought in North Africa at Oran, and joined in the defence of Perpignan against the French, and gained thus the Order Grand Cross of Alcantara. He retained Spain, I think, as his inspiration in much of his life. But Spain introduced him to that lady who counted for so much in the life of the son who alone has kept alive the Gonzaga name. In Chieri, near Turin, in Piedmont, the Barons of Tana of Santena were powerful. The family was, quite possibly, German in origin, although the materials have been collected for a fine piece of comparative religion here, had but the personages in question but been gods instead of nobles. For the name Tana is not unlike the German name Tanne : now the family of Tana held for some time the office of Steward to the Dukes of Savoy, while the family Truchsess-Tanne-Waldburg held that of Butler to the Emperor. Unable, perhaps, to assert that the families were one and the same, students have not failed to surmise that the connection between them was invented on the grounds of similarity of name and duties. Whether, then, or no the Tana were connected with the Tanne, Don Baltasar married Donna Anna della Rovere, whose family was beyond exception splendid and

authentic. Her grandfather Jerome was uncle of the Cardinal della Rovere whose name will recur below : and though her branch of the family belonged to Turin, and that of the two della Rovere Popes, Sixtus IV and Julius II, to Savona, the clan held closely together, especially after the exaltation of these its members to the throne of Peter. Marta, daughter of Baltasar and Anna, was at the court of Henri II of France, while Piedmont was under French rule, and became dear to Isabel of Valois as her maid of honour and went with her to Spain when she married Philip II as his third wife. At Madrid Ferrante fell in love with her, and approached the King on the question of a marriage, who communicated the matter to the Queen, who in her turn approached Donna Marta. Among the frivolous French and then in the sterner court of Spain, this lady had kept her life secret and unstained. She begged for space to reflect, and caused many Masses to be said in honour of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, the Passion, Our Lady, and the Angels ; and when an answer arrived from Italy that her parents approved the match, as well they might, a Jubilee was in process of celebration at the Spanish court, and affairs like betrothals were in abeyance. However, on June 24th, 1566, the alliance was solemnly inaugurated, and both Ferrante and Donna Marta received Holy Communion as its preface. The Queen however was expecting a child, which was not born till August 11th, and only then was the marriage celebrated. The pomp was superb : Austrian royalties as well as all the Spanish court were present : another Jubilee was on foot, and again both bride and bridegroom received Communion : moreover, theirs was the first wedding to be celebrated in Spain according to the new regulations imposed by Trent. Not until the next year did Ferrante and his wife obtain leave to depart from Spain, that their eldest son, as they hoped, might be born in his destined realm of Castiglione. Before leaving, Ferrante received from the King the high dignity of Chamberlain or honorary Lord-in-Waiting, together with large pensions from the kingdom of Naples and the Duchy of Milan for himself and the unborn son. Connected

with these graces was the heavy office of Commander-in-Chief to all the Italian infantry that Spain could then control.

The Marquis and his wife drove up, therefore, through the outer town of Castiglione, known for its charm and wide-spaced houses and gardens, till the streets narrowed towards the ramparts of the citadel. Soldiers were massed there, by the drawbridge. The drawbridge sank, the carriage rolled through the square-topped gate of the guard-tower, and the cheering died away. Through the jumbled buildings of barracks, chapels, servants' quarters that an old painting shows us, they reached the heavy castle-keep with its squat tower—a place of many twisting corridors and rooms askew, darkly splendid. And within it, a new life began for Donna Marta. In Spain she had resolved that she would so far as possible make use of her great position to do good: she began forthwith to endear herself to her vassals by her charity, and with her husband attended Mass on Sundays, not in the castle chapel, but the parish church. As the time neared when her child should be born, she felt the need to nourish her soul with spiritual books to an extent, she said, that never did she experience before or afterwards, not even when other children were to be born. She prayed hard for a son, and even, that he might be chosen to serve God in the religious life, though a prayer more unlikely to be granted could scarcely be devised.

On March 9th, 1568, the birth of her son took place, just before nightfall. Her suffering had been appalling: it seemed out of the question that both child and mother could survive. Ferrante summoned doctor after doctor: in his desperation, he told them to baptise the unborn infant, and then take measures that his wife, rather than his son, should live. They demurred: tried other means to accelerate the birth: and then despaired of both. Marta was told: she vowed that should the baby live as well as herself, she would take it some day to Our Lady of Loreto. The immediate danger passed: but the doctors still thought the child would die, and they baptised it even before its mother's delivery was

complete. She roused herself, made the sign of the Cross upon it, and for an hour it lay still without sign of life. Then it gave a little cry, and thereafter cried no more. Next day, there was sufficient uproar. Salvos of artillery, from the citadel, greeted the birth of the heir: Ferrante issued his official proclamation: a Te Deum was sung. Bread and wine were lavished on the townsfolk: sports and entertainments were provided, and paused only to be renewed when on April 20th the solemn ceremonies of baptism, omitted in those first anxious moments, were supplied in the parish church. The Duke of Mantua stood godfather, sending Don Prosper Gonzaga to be his proxy; the baby's aunt, wife of Alfonso Gonzaga of Castel Goffredo, was godmother: a youth from Padua, de' Rossi, made an oration; and John Baptist Pastorio, the arch-priest of Castiglione, un-nerved, you would say, by the grandeurs attendant on the occasion, wrote out a Latin certificate in which he got into trouble with the titles, and began by calling the Duke 'Most Illustrious,' which did not suffice for a Duke, and continued with 'Most Illustrious Lord,' which too was inadequate, and so he crossed both out and crushed the proper 'Serenissimus' in between the lines. Even then, in his enthusiasm, he wished to end with a prayer in hexameters, and began it: *Sit felix charusque Deo*—Be he happy and dear to God—and then tailed desperately off into unpretentious prose, changing the construction, so that it ran: 'Be he happy, and may he live dear to God Thrice Good, Thrice Great, and to his fellow-men for ever.' Assuredly the good man's prayer has been fulfilled.

Meanwhile, in the quiet castle, a clock, presented to Donna Marta by some grandee on this occasion, ticked away the minutes of that strange babyhood, and, on many little gongs, made each hour musical.

CHAPTER II

TIGER-LILY

This boy hath taught us manly duties ! Cymbeline iv. 2

It is hardly too much to say that any boy, born at that time to a position like that of Aloysius, was doomed to tragedy. One enormous menace brooded over Europe : the Turk, from Africa and Asia, seemed likely to drive even further than he had, his triumphs into Christendom. Lepanto was still distant : Hungary was over-run, and Tunis, confronting Sicily, had relapsed into Mohammedan hands. There were few who did not despair of Germany : Austria was hesitating, and even Poland. France at this very time was torn asunder by wars wherein who knew what was religion, what politics : Elizabeth had for ten years been playing a desperate game in England, baffling the princes of Europe by her cynical virginity, yet none the less, staking all, at last, on that Protestantism which, sectarian in its essence, had for first effect to divide England off from whatever truly made for stability in Europe. The Lombard plain, more even than the Netherlands, was the cockpit of Europe. Austria, Spain, and France almost had to vivisect her for their several advantages ; and Rome itself was distracted by the challenges offered to the Pope's alliance.

It is often said that this period, none the less, was that of the Counter-Reformation, and that Aloysius was born into a better world than that of his father or grandfather. That a strong reforming spirit was at work, who shall deny ? But it most certainly had not changed the heart of a population that centuries of misrule, lay and ecclesiastical, had corrupted. A Catholic historian truly says, that for the first few generations after the good work began, ' life remained practically unchanged in the general sum of things.' Paul III, no doubt,

despite his scandalous beginnings, inaugurated the new age. Not a step did ecclesiastical reform advance under, say, Leo X. Degeneration was then extreme. This can be judged by the contents of the very candid advice that was given to him. The first period of the new St. Peter's was appalling. Its Canons still went to sing office there, having previously heaped their secular costume and their sword in the atrium, resuming them directly their hour of worship was over. True, the attempted reform, in classical terms, of the breviary did not wholly succeed: we are not to-day forced to call on the Trinity as *Numen Triforme Olympi*: nor on God, as *Deus deorum maxime*: nor insult Our Lady by invoking her as *felix dea*, or *nympha candidissima*. That did not prevent the music in the churches being but a travesty: men sang secular words to secular tunes, while one or two, to the same music, repeated the liturgical sentences. The Colonna, who had windows looking into the Santissimi Apostoli, still on May 1st let birds into that church, and a pig, which they watched being fought for. That popes and prelates should look after the interest of their relatives, if not sons, was regarded as but prudence: theories went about, that the Pope, being supreme in the Church, was master of all that therein was, and could therefore dispose of it at will, even by sale, and that so simony, in his case, was impossible. This was the time when the would-be reformers saw no way but to suppress religious orders, or at least to ensure their extinction by forbidding them to receive novices: I have often thought that one reason why Aloysius was to have to placard his most obstinate and personal will to become a religious in spite of all his world, was, that the convents of the time were packed with forced vocations, or rather, of inmates in whose case no pretence of vocation had been made, or was suggested. The incredible plays acted in convents, incredible alike in general theme, in episodes, in rôles assumed by nuns, leave us clear as to the absolute heroism required of women who determined to live, therein, the true religious life. Almost no wonder, if those who did so at all, became ecstatic saints. Courte-

sans still, in the streets of Rome, made their triumphal progresses to Mass surrounded by troops of laymen and of clerics : and great bishops seldom resided in their sees. As for the level of—I will not say, ecclesiastical knowledge in the clergy, but education of any sort, it could scarcely have been lower. One correspondent wrote to Lainez, the second General of the Society, that eight out of ten priests should be deprived : the new examinations that authority strove to impose on priests always began by seeing if they could read—even in 1582, Claudius Acquaviva, Aloysius's own General, had to praise a Visitor to one of the Jesuit provinces themselves, because he was making sure that no scholastic should be ordained unless he could read properly and had some knowledge of theological terms—so tenacious was the evil tradition, and so hard to eradicate it even from the men of highest ideals : it was just at the time of St. Aloysius's birth that the Jesuits began systematically to missionise South Italy, and a whole series of impassioned letters reached Rome, asking why men should be sent to foreign parts when such districts as these lay near home—' Italian Indies ' is a nickname that recurs again and again under their pen. Almost always priests required to be taught the formula of absolution : and in 1550 Landini wrote from the Bolognese and Modenese territories in the north, that the murders in those mountains might outstrip the hundred in the day, and, what is more, were done in ignorance, by men who did not know that it was wrong to murder. . . . When judgment is passed on a life like Aloysius's, it must incessantly be remembered that in this manner of world he was born, and that by every tradition proper to the normal man of his family, this was the sort of world he was expected to keep up. When you read that such and such a prince governed his territory well, you do not read any suggestion that he was setting himself to correct this manner of abuse. His ' well ' was such, in contrast to what *bad* government at that period could succeed in being. The sort of document from which I have quoted overlaps, in every department, into the lifetime of Aloysius and beyond it. Yet but a few years

ago had died a Pope who was a Saint : Charles Borromeo was already born, and was to grow up a Cardinal-Saint : Maria Maddelena de' Pazzi, a noblewoman of Florence, was soon enough to enter Carmel and become a Saint : the joyous little Polish prince, Stanislaus Kostka, died, a Saint, but a few months after Aloysius was born. And we can honestly hold that men were not, in this age of contrasts, merely being shocked, by missions, into setting a strong, but transient, contrast within their own lives, but were being drilled and established in a good permanent quiet choice by the Exercises of Ignatius, stringently carried through in all parts of that same land of Italy.

In the dark castle, incomparably the greatest influence must have been Donna Marta. So too she remained. Aloysius writes to her, long years later, as to not one other, not even his brethren in the Society. You can see that she was the only person with whom he felt free, and to whom alone he could express his true heart's thoughts. The tragic fate that was to be hers might indeed already have been guessed by her, as by anyone who linked themselves with the Gonzagas ; and her calm features, in the portrait that remains, have on them the stamp of a controlled sorrow. But for actual joy and peace, I can think of nothing so perfect as these first few years. Lepanto was fought in 1571, when Aloysius was three : Don John of Austria was returning from it only to lead his ships against Tunis, now in Mohammedan power. For some time Ferrante had had word from Spain that he was to raise at least 3,000 Italian infantry, join Don John, and then command the fleet that sailed for Africa. This must have kept him often and far away from Castiglione, and for the while Donna Marta remained happy with her three little sons, Aloysius, Rodolfo, born in 1569, and Ferrante, born in 1570. Ferrante died when he was only seven.¹

¹ Carlo was born in 1572, and died two years later : Isabella was born in 1574, and died in 1593 ; Francis, who inherited after the murder of Rodolfo, was born in 1577 ; Cristierno Vincenzo, born in 1580, whose son Charles afterwards became reigning prince ; he died

In 1572, however, Ferrante was to proceed to the training of his troops, and resolved to have Aloysius with him, to break him in early and well to the art of arms. He took him away to Casale Maggiore, a small town on the left of the Po, which has so corroded its banks that little enough of what an old pen-and-ink drawing shows of the town remains. However, the fields were wide and flat, and suited to reviews and drill: Venice had from time immemorial used its great oaks for the building of her ships—the wood was floated down the river to the Adriatic, 120 miles distant.

The Marquis had an apt disciple. He had already had all manner of toy weapons made for his small son, with which, at home, he used to play at soldiers. Now he invented suits of light armour, cuirass and halberd such as officers carried, and dressed the boy in these, and made him march beside him, and stand by while he reviewed the troops. The lad was enterprising. Muskets were beginning to be used along with the huge pikes of the ordinary soldier, and Aloysius could not keep away from them. He was allowed, by the delighted soldiers, to fire them off, and once almost scorched his face off doing so. And again, one day when, in the torpid noon, all were taking their siesta, the terrible infant crawled forth, stole some more powder from some friend's flask, and managed all by himself to load and fire off a small field piece. The gun-carriage knocked him down with its recoil: but worse—in the dead silence, the explosion had been terrific. Ferrante thought there was a mutiny: he leapt from his tent, called out the guard, and ordered the instant arrest of all the mutineers. And behold, in a few minutes, the company of sturdy north-Italian soldiers marching back, having under arrest one poor little fellow of six. Well, six or sixty, he was a soldier, and was to take his military punishment. But he had become a sort of regimental mascot, and the troops begged him off.

in 1635; and finally Diego, born 1582, and murdered when he was only fifteen, when his mother too was stabbed and left for dead: but see p. 99.

In the summer of 1573, Ferrante went off to Tunis, and Aloysius went home to Castiglione. There he continued the same sort of life as he had enjoyed at Casalmaggiore. All too completely indeed. During his stay in barracks and his wandering round the camp-fires, he had acquired a style of language which may most discreetly be described as Military. When therefore he began to express himself in the castle haunted now almost only by court-ladies, loud cries were raised. The boy's tutor, Pierfrancesco del Turco, explained to him that young men of his rank did not use expressions from the gutter. The boy was satisfied, at the time, with this motive. Later on, when he realized the extreme indecency of his words, he became overwhelmed to a degree that might disconcert us. His thefts of gunpowder also distressed his memories. Yet his mind was clear upon the subject—he had used the words without knowing what they meant: he had only taken what the soldiers would have been sure to give to him. Why then, you might ask, worry? I recall to myself St. Augustine's shudder at the thought of a boyish theft of pears. But how could such things matter? Augustine saw distinctly that they mattered, as revealing in his small self a tendency to 'wrong,' just because it was wrong. He had made for the pears precisely because he knew he ought not—he did not want to eat them; in fact, he threw them away. Augustine for some long time pursued the course of taking what he wanted: Grace already forebade Aloysius to do so. But I certainly think he saw, when he began to reflect, that there was in himself nothing whatsoever to check him in the human slide towards the pleasant and the easy and the selfish, a down-grade that always lands you in the arbitrary and the sensual. His temperament is indeed to reveal itself as passionate rather than sensual, but masterful in all conscience. Against this latter trend he had always to govern himself almost violently; as for the rest, there are indeed boys who have an almost fierce instinct against the very fragrance of the obscene: in some, it lasts: it did, in Aloysius. But I think that neither this nor anything else that was good would have

lasted in him, without that terrible self-discipline which after a while he was to begin to impose upon himself. Meanwhile, he realized that he ought not simply to grab at what he wanted, and, that he must not lower himself.

In any case, the influence of del Turco was being admirable. This man was well chosen by Ferrante to look after his son. He was descended from a very ancient line—the Pandolfini of Florence had fought in the third crusade so fiercely against the Turks that one of them (1189-1192) acquired the surname that persisted. Having covered himself with glory at the defence of Semifonte in 1202, he bequeathed the two names to his descendants who were thereafter known as the Turchi di Semifonte, and it was of this family that the tutor's was the continuation. Long afterwards it absorbed the family of the Rosselli, and still exists as the Rosselli del Turco. Pierfrancesco was born in 1545, and after some time is found living in the via de' Ginori, behind the Medicean palace which is to-day the prefecture.¹

He went while still quite young to Castiglione, and was actually in the castle when Aloysius was born, and in this same year, 1568, his family was officially enrolled in the Mantuan patriciate. His strong yet refined and silver-bearded face is still to be seen in a portrait kept by one of the branches of the Turco family in Florence, and is, frankly, a better head than Ferrante's, whose face has elements of fatuity.²

Under this man, the boy's education must have been robust. Del Turco's extreme level-headedness and objectivity of outlook is seen in the evidence he gave when the first enquiries concerning his ward's virtues were set on foot. It is outstandingly terse and to the point, and without any devout rhetoric or generalizations. He constantly backs his words with expressions like: 'I know this, because I saw it.' 'I say

¹ The superb palace now called the del Turco palace, in the Borgo SS. Apostoli, was only bought by them in 1750.

² I confess the portrait is rather conventional: the Marquis wears full armour, and also ruff: and oddly, I find the general structure of his face extraordinarily like the pseudo-Veronese portrait of a page, falsely assigned by Iozzi as that of Aloysius.

this, for I was there myself,' 'I saw it myself.' I think that two predominant factors are to be found in the boy's upbringing—his mother, and his tutor. From his mother, whom in features he resembled, he seems to have derived something of his intense spirituality: his own calm judgement, and power of facing facts, and economy of words are obvious, and if tutoring counts for anything, I think he could be grateful to del Turco for these characteristics. His actual schooling he received from Giovanni Albertinelli of Castiglione and then Giulio Bresciani of Cremona. At seven, which was about what twelve would be, I fancy, in English boys, his mind began to awake. He developed a sense of responsibility and of values: he called it, later on, the time of his 'conversion.' He prayed with care, refusing a cushion for his knees, but his prayers were entirely vocal, out of books that his mother taught him. All his life, at least till he went to Rome, he recited the simple prayers called the 'Daily Exercise,' and was beginning to love the Psalms. He said daily, as well as the Little Office of Our Lady, the seven penitential psalms, and sometimes too the Gradual Psalms, asking one of the maid-servants or his mother to say them with him when he was tired. I find it touching to reflect that quite at the end of his life, when death was almost dawning, he was still faithful to psalms from among those he had, as a boy, begun to love. He went about with his mother among the citizens: they began to venerate him; once, when a friar, deemed very holy, was besieged by devotees at the Franciscan house about a mile outside the town, and was curing persons considered to be possessed, Aloysius went to look on. At once the sick folks began to cry that *he* was the holy one, and should have great honour. However, the edge of physical vitality became now blunted: he caught malaria, of the kind whose fever returns every four days, and though the illness was in itself slight, it helped to put an end to too much playing at soldiers.

The expedition to Tunis, owing to the lack of Spanish backing, collapsed: even the port Goletta had to be restored

to its Mohammedan masters: Ferrante went to the court of Spain, where he stayed more than two years.¹ On his return he found a very changed Aloysius. The boy was no more all for soldiering, but was displaying a sort of grown-up self-possession that enchanted his father. The ambitious man began to see in him the ideal statesman, rather than general: the perfect politician. This characteristic calm intelligence, combined with forcefulness, remained always noticeable in Aloysius: it was to be commented on again and again: he had the true instinct for good government.

What the boy did not tell his father was that the idea of joining a religious order had already occurred to him. He had heard his mother say that she hoped one of her many sons would do so, and Aloysius replied: 'I think God will do you that favour.' Another time when he was with her he repeated this, and added: 'I think I shall be the one.' Donna Marta said she wished to hear no more of that—that he was eldest son of itself settled his career. However, she put the saying in her heart and pondered it and prayed.

The Marquis had no long stay in his titular city. Plague broke out, and soon enough was devastating all the Lombard plain and even Italy. It seemed safest to go so far as possible, and that town of Monferrato was chosen which had come into Gonzaga possession through Margherita Palaeologa, and on which so many envious eyes still were being cast, for its strong position made it a constant object of desire and attack. It lay between Genoa and Milan. When the Gonzagas recovered Montferrato, a little before this time, it was in a ruined condition.

Its fretful spires and heavier close-packed towers, its jagged fortifications and military outworks made it a place such as Aloysius had never yet seen. Scarcely was he there, however,

¹ He is said to have returned to Castiglione at the end of 1576: but since Francis was born in April, 1577, and it is unthinkable that he was illegitimate, he must at least have visited his home before then.

than the unfortunate Ferrante found himself attacked by gout, his life-long foe, and an illness from which every important person, lay or ecclesiastical, of the period seems to have suffered. Rodolfo too was unwell, and Ferrante was told to go himself, and to take Rodolfo, to Lucca for the baths. Donna Marta, grieving much, was left behind, and the Marquis and his two elder sons betook themselves to that city of quaint contrasts—venerable antiquity, and flaunting modernisms, for it was as much a fashionable resort as any spa of our own day ; its contemptuous or snarling camels, descendants of the Crusades, and its richly habited Volto Santo, by which William Rufus loved to swear, and of which almost to the end Aloysius kept a picture. The Marquis took the prescribed course of baths, and decided he had had quite enough of Lucca. But the neighbourhood of Florence settled his next move. Francesco de' Medici, then reigning Grand Duke of Tuscany, had been sent to Spain by his father, Cosimo I, to learn how to rule. There Ferrante had made close and lasting friends with this sinister personage. He resolved to make use of this for his two sons, and to put them under Francesco's wing at Florence that they too might learn princely manners, and, to talk Tuscan, since hitherto their local Lombard dialect was what they habitually used. By roads, therefore, which even in our own day were appalling, the cavalcade set forth for the dazzling town. But a check befell them. No gate would open to them. They had come from infected areas, and might not be admitted. Del Turco came to the rescue. His cousin Jacopo had a little house at Fiesole, and within its white-washed walls, among the cypresses, the olives, and the vines, the Marquis condescended to establish himself with his two sons.

From the high terrace, you may still see the view that Aloysius saw, and if but sunset draws a veil of light over the distance, fusing details, you see little that he did not see. Of course the city has grown to a size greater than ever he guessed, but the suburbs can be lost in the transparent gold, and the vast cupola of the Duomo, the lesser dome of San Lorenzo

where the Medici lie buried, Giotto's tower, the spire of the Novella, of the Badia, the mass of Santa Croce, the grim brick of the Signoria, and, over the Arno, San Miniato, are what make the landmarks, and all these were there. In the astonishing loveliness of evening, sapphire and emerald and golden light so floods the scene that these great buildings showed but as dusky amethysts : at other hours, the enormous Cathedral, Our Lady of the Flower, floats like a tinted cloud of white, dim green, pale pink, over the rust-red roofs. The memory of Aloysius still haunts the ancient hill : his room has become a chapel, and we have prayed in it : even, we have been entertained in the room where the Gonzagas too, during that sojourn, took their meals : a little lower down the hill, a lichened shrine bears this affectionate inscription placed there by an English hand :

“ Upon these hills, where walking as a boy, Luigi Gonzaga, thou wast aware of God, rain down Grace which amid this so smiling nature may recall heaven to men.”¹

The stay at Fiesole was not lengthy, though it is good to know that Aloysius often went up from Florence to pass time, once again, among these honourable folks, amid the riot of roses, the sharper-scented herbs, the fountains falling among cypresses that stand in bronze-green masses over the misty olive trees. But Ferrante had not come to Tuscany to admire nature. He sent word to the Grand-Duke that he had arrived, and Francis at once called him down to Florence, plague or no plague. Aloysius and Rodolfo were presented : so charmed was the Grand-Duke that he instantly offered to house them in his palace. Ferrante, who did not draw the line at much, drew it at that, and after a while the Grand-Duke put a house in the via degli Angeli (now via degli Alfani) at their disposal.

¹ Su questi colli ove passeggiando giovinetto sentisti Iddio, o Luigi Gonzaga, piove grazia che in tanto riso della terra ricordi agli uomini il cielo.

Here the Marquis left them, in the charge of del Turco, Bresciani, and his own major-domo, Clemente Ghizoni, who remained loyal to Aloysius to the very end of his life at home, and then became Ferrante's personal servant.

CHAPTER III

SUME ET SUSCIPE !

*I have looked to Thee from the beginning,
Straight up to Thee through all the world,
Which, like an idle scroll, lay furled
To nothingness on either side :
And since the time Thou wast descried,
Spite of the weak heart, so have I
Lived ever, and so fain would die.*

Christmas Eve.

It is of incalculable importance to see, if we can, the atmosphere of places such as the court of Florence.

The atmosphere of Castiglione itself must have been, I imagine, relatively sweet and pure. All the same, we need to allow ourselves no illusions. You only have to read the speeches, in contemporary documents, put into the mouths of girls or women represented as the perfection of every virtue, to be clear that innocence never meant ignorance, and that no one ever dreamt that it ought to do so. Urbino was supposed to have been, not long before, the quite ideal court, and of it I speak in a moment. High-mindedness and good order of life were supposed to prevail there as nowhere else. It is unlikely then that Castiglione was much better. After all, it was full of soldiers and of court ladies not all of whom can have had the ideals of Donna Marta. Moreover, you have to remember that boys were married off at ages that to us seem incredibly immature, and girls even younger. Bridegrooms of fourteen and girls of twelve were no rarities. Women began to throw themselves at the heads of mere boys, when a brilliant marriage could be hoped for : Aloysius must have been simply suffocated with feminine advances. I think too that among the less high-souled denizens even of the Castiglione court, many will have suffered from the infection of

that subtly degrading fact of its not being in the front rank of courts, so that its world imitated, rather than set a standard, as Bucharest or Belgrade do Paris, which is always a harmful thing. Even Castiglione must have been a sort of mixture of a monastery, a military school, and an æsthetic studio, in the midst of which was planted a small boy, perpetually given to understand that he was by far the most important person there. For Donna Marta and del Turco could not have been the only two people he ever talked to. And now the boy was transplanted to the most magnificent courts of all, where insane vices triumphed openly among men of incredible wealth, arbitrary power, and murderous disposition.

If medieval Provence educated Italy, Italy repaid the debt by civilizing Europe. The theme of the troubadours was Love, when it was not War; and interminable discussions on Love, problems set to be answered by one after the other of a group of idle and (I take it) incredibly bored ladies and gentlemen became as popular in Italy as they had been over the Alps. The influence of Boccaccio was enormous. From the very outset the practice of passing time away by telling stories had prevailed; the theme of the stories was almost always love: in realist Italy the romantic element proper to the Middle Ages where Chivalry strongly influenced sentiment, never existed. Plato's philosophy diffused itself in a way that made it possible to talk in an abstract and detached manner about topics that were concrete in the extreme, and Cicero set a model for method, and of course for style. Bembo, born in 1470, carried on an intimacy with Lucrezia Borgia, then duchess of Ferrara, which has occasioned who knows how many discussions on the possibility of Platonic Love, as they said and say. Anyhow, to her he dedicated his *Gli Asolani*, ' dialogues ' purporting to have been held at the ' court ' of Caterina Cornaro, ex-queen of Cyprus at the castle of Asolo, somewhat north of Venice. The discussions all concern Love, true and false. If I mention but a few titles of the books published after the manner of the Symposium of Plato or Cicero's Tusculan Disputations during this period,

their tendency will be sufficiently clear. There were Diacetto's *Tre Libri d'Amore*, and his *Panegirico all' Amore*; Hebreo's *Dialoghi d'Amore*; Nobili's *Trattato d'Amore Humano*; Tasso's *Cavaliere Amante e la Gentil-donna Amata*—and a whole list of ' dialogues ' could be made presenting the same theme. All of them, howbeit they extolled a subtle spiritual love, needed for contrast to dwell upon every other kind of love, even the incestuous. Equicola, who wrote *della Natura d'Amore*, almost certainly followed Isabella d'Este to Mantua when she married Francesco Gonzaga, Marquis there.

The amazing ' Academies,' that became so popular at this time, had disputes that were at least as much social entertainment as intellectual exercises, and the very names of these groups—The Inflamed, the Astounded, The Bemused, The Fiery Ones—show how far they were from the serenity of abstract metaphysics! It must be understood that disputes, or questions put, discussed, and answered, were not only a pastime suited to tedious evenings in a Court, but were a regular part of a festivity such as a marriage. ' Can a man love without hope? the dead? the unknown? Is it better to speak to the beloved without seeing her, or, see her without being able to speak to her? ' Tasso published a challenge containing fifty such questions for the marriage-feasts of Lucrezia d'Este who married della Rovere afterwards duke of Urbino. It was a lady, Bertolaia Cavalletti, who attacked the statement that ' a man by his nature can love more intensely and constantly than a woman.' At times, the views expressed were very sublime: at others, the suggestion is quite cynical, as when ' the opinion called Honour ' is described as based on ' the supposition that a man, if nothing appears to the contrary, is good ' ; and the Marquis of Carrara asks how an adulterer can possibly be infamous, ' since men are not ashamed of committing adultery but rather boast of it as an honourable thing, nor was it ever heard that a man lost his honour because he committed it, though adulterers are infinite in number.' It is Matteo Bandello who, in the prefaces to his novels, adds so many vivid details to our knowledge of

the court of Mantua and the other smaller courts that made a constellation round about it. For after 1525 he went to live there under the patronage of Francis Gonzaga who married Isabella d'Este. In fact, he fell in love with Lucrezia Gonzaga with whose parents he afterwards lived at Castelfelfredo. In this way we know so many of the games these people played; after getting hot over them they would retire to their arbours and their fountains and proceed to tell the stories and hold the disputations. The tricks of the wives of Henry VIII of England, cleverly played for his deceiving, entertained them much, which suggests that there was another aspect to that bully's behaviour besides what we usually hear of. Remember that this cultured world held violent contradictions. A duke and duchess of Ferrara were capable of turning a live deer loose in a room where a 'dispute' was being held: and on returning from a hunt, a prince could serenely cause the mutilated boars to be brought into the drawing-room and spread out on the floor, till the ladies were quite faint—not, remark, from the sight of the blood, but of the tusks. In the book I shall quote in a moment, courtiers are advised to be very careful not to make the mistakes into which they are apt to fall when they want to be amusing. Thus, some think themselves good courtiers in proportion as they can make a lady blush by their indecent language: others shove into one another on the stairs: or throw wood, or even bricks, at one another's backs; or dust into the eyes; they think it comic to make a horse fall into a ditch; they throw soup or sauces, at table, into one another's faces. Others even see who can eat or drink the most disgusting thing. This sort of behaviour should not be regarded as genuinely funny. . . .

None the less, besides music and dancing, during which apparently the couples continually kissed one another, and elderly games like chess or draughts, and the dialogues of which something has been said and which counted as games themselves, all sorts of 'parlour games' existed and were invented chiefly to please ladies and spread quite probably

from Italy all over Europe. I repeat, the boredom of the long empty days, not least when there was war or plague, must have been appalling. Girolamo Bargagli wrote an entire dialogue on Sienese games which were a sort of re-discovery (he died in 1586). He belonged to the Academy of the *Intronati* and was nicknamed '*Materiale Intronato*,' or the Dazed Dolt—the Academy was called, at large, the Dazed Ones—*lucus a non lucendo*—and each member had his personal nickname, Il Sodo : L'Attonito : Il Frastigliato (the Mince Pie, as we might say : the man whose mind and talk was all in little pieces and disordered) as though a club were to-day to call itself The Fools, and each member was The Silly Fool, the Prize Idiot, The Perfect Ass, and so forth. This Academy, then, existed to reform the Sienese games which were few and so coarse and vulgar that they could hardly be played in decent company at all. Such games were now to be 'noble,' and might be games of Wit, or Ingenuity, or Jest, or just Pleasure. Examples of the first sort are : Transformations, when each says what animal he would like to be, and why ; or Comparisons, when a lover says what his lady is like, and why ; a game of jest would be Trades, when you pretend to practise a trade and are accused of doing it badly ; or Oaths, when each chooses an amusing oath and then one player forces the others, as by pinching or tickling them, to utter one of these oaths ; when you hear your own uttered you must rise and do the same. Forfeits of a singularly childish sort might be annexed to a game—you had to hold a heavy weight till you won ; you had to dye your face—the opposite of this occurred when a lady who, alone of the company, was not made up, gave for forfeit that everyone should do as she did, and then sent for a basin of water and washed her face, which the other ladies much objected to. The frequency with which scurrilous or irreverent games are denounced, suggests that their performance was no less frequent ; and as their denunciation involves their description, it appears to become, as denunciations so often do, little more than a free advertisement. The complicated symbolism used in some of these

games can be judged from, for example, the *Novelle* of Pietro Fortini who died in 1562. The book was composed for 'poor silly young men' who found themselves tongue-tied through inexperience when they wished to participate in 'conversations on love' in polite assemblies and ran away when their turn came to relate a story (such stories were usually 'examples'—as of Skill in Love on the part of a Nobleman: Stupidity in Love on the part of a Mistress, and so forth) or stood like a statue or an image of shame. The company described by Fortini is composed of five young ladies no less virtuous than witty and two elegant young men 'most devoted to the service of love.' No answer having been reached in the discussion on the question propounded by Costanzio, one of the youths, to the virtuous and witty ladies—Why does a young woman caress a young lover more than she does her husband, though both be equally rich, handsome, noble, and so forth?—Ippolito, who is in love with Corintia, and who has (as they each have) a roast bird before him, removes its heart and sends it on a silver dish to Corintia. It is *his* heart. She, however, returns it, though politely, with the wings of her own fowl. She will not accept him because of his fickleness. He sits downcast and silent. Adriana was too shy to make a like present to Costanzio, but took the heart of *her* fowl and put it in the salt-cellar, to show at least that she was on fire for him, since salt, 'as is known,' consumes and burns. Costanzio, rather startingly, wishing to show he did not want her to burn for him, poured some water from the carafe over salt and heart alike. He then sent the empty breast of his pigeon (for he had finished eating it) to Emilia, who put the heart of *her* pigeon into it and sent it back. So everyone was pleased, and adjourned to a concert and a comedy and then had supper and talk, and separated, arranging to meet next day as usual in church, where they in fact all came, 'the two youths, as is the wont of men, walking about the church for their amusement while Mass lasted.' They then all betook themselves to their hostess's house and her small but ingenious garden, where there were two little mounds

with model houses built 'in perspective' so that they seemed real, and a wood with thrushes that you could shoot and a theatre and fountains, and while you talked birds and animals kept appearing in the wood and frogs in the fountain, so cleverly done that everything appeared real and not mechanical. Then the conversations proceeded, interrupted by music, mummers and comedies.

Fortini insists that nearly all of this actually happened as he relates it, and that only the names are changed. Since it is practically impossible to read any of this sort of book during this period, without discovering that the author was at some time or other at one of the Gonzaga courts, and when one may read that this Saint or that 'would not play games,' or go to plays, or even shunned general conversation and preferred his solitude to company, or even, 'heard Mass devoutly,' all that the normal behaviour would have implied has to be remembered.

The best that can be said about contemporary society—a 'best' that is thought to have been unique—can be found in the *Cortegiano* of Baldassare Castiglione. It describes, in effect, the court of Urbino in the sixteenth century. The glory of Urbino begins with the extinction of the legitimate line of its early lords in the person of Count Oddantonio, created Duke of Urbino in 1443 by Eugenius IV, and assassinated by his subjects who could not bear his scandalous life. His illegitimate brother Frederick, legitimated by Martin V in 1444, succeeded him. His father Guidantonio had brought him to court when his first wife died, and his second, Caterina Colonna, educated him as her own son. When he was eight, he was betrothed to Gentile Brancaleone and the Pope promised the investiture of her father's fief to Guidantonio on condition the marriage took place. After the betrothal this young lady's mother took over the education of her daughter's fiancé. At eleven, however, he was sent by his father as a hostage to Venice, to settle a quarrel between the Pope and the Colonnas, and thence, since plague was feared, to Gianfrancesco Gonzaga, with whom Guidantonio was connected,

at Mantua. There the Marquis personally educated him in all that concerned the art of war, while Vittorino da Feltre had charge of his intelligence. Frederick returned after some years to Urbino where his father gradually taught him the rules of government, and married him to Gentile when he was fifteen. He thereupon took over the management of her dowry-fief—some twenty castles and towns. During his long career as a soldier, he began that adornment of Urbino, where he was elected lord on the assassination of Oddantonio, which his son Guidobaldo perfected. It was here that Frederick created and housed the Urbinatan library, for long the foremost in Europe. Guidobaldo at sixteen married Elizabetta Gonzaga, daughter of Frederick Marquis of Mantua and Margaret of Bavaria; after a very troubled career owing to Cesare Borgia who needed an establishment and invaded Urbino, he ended happily, because when Alexander VI had died, Julius II (after the twenty-six days' pontificate of Pius III) became Pope, being brother of Giovanni della Rovere, who had married Guidobaldo's sister. The Pope summoned him to Rome, and it was there that he met Baldassare Castiglione. This nobleman, born in 1478, was the son of a captain of the Marquis of Mantua, and his mother was Luigia di Antonio Gonzaga. At Rome he asked leave to transfer himself to the very Gonzagan atmosphere of Urbino, where besides his kinswoman Elizabetta, a Cesare Gonzaga was living. The Marquis of Mantua permitted the transfer, though it apparently annoyed him much and he remained ill-disposed to Baldassare. In fact, when in 1505 Baldassare was sent by Guidobaldo, now Duke of Urbino, to warn the Marquis of Mantua of the Pope's intended attack on the Romagna, it was only through Cesare Gonzaga that he escaped being captured by that prince. In 1507, he was sent to receive, as proxy for the Duke, the Garter from Henry VII, who treated him with extreme kindness and perhaps for this reason the Marquis of Mantua made up his quarrel. It is at this time, after a second visit of the Pope to Urbino, that Baldassare places the action of his *Cortegiano*.

About twenty-five persons share in the discussions, four being women—the Duchess, her intimate friend Emilia Pio who had married an illegitimate brother of the Duke's, Costanza Fregoso and Margherita Gonzaga, illegitimate daughter of a brother of the Duchess's and one of the most brilliant court ladies. Baldassare, to avoid making himself one of the disputants, feigns to be absent on a mission to the Prince of Wales, afterwards Henry VIII. Great noblemen, soldiers, men of letters, statesmen, artists, form the group; comic relief is provided by the buffoon, a friar Serafino. The book is dedicated to a cousin of Ariosto's, and appeared at the Aldine press in Venice, 1528.¹

Though closely modelled in form and sometimes in detail on Cicero's *De Oratore*, it gives a glowing account of the court and its inhabitants and then relates how new games were to be invented and how the first suggestion was a discussion on what virtues and what vices (since it is necessary that all should have some fault) a man would prefer his lady-love to possess. Cesare Gonzaga maintained that since everybody was more or less mad, each should state in what way he or she would go mad if they did so publicly, 'judging from the sparks of madness I am seen every day to emit.' The Frate said that everyone should surmise why women all hate mice and love snakes, to which none but he knew the answer: another, that each should say what was the meaning of the letter S that the Duchess wore as a gold ornament on her forehead, and himself recited a sonnet on the subject that he said was extempore, which half the company disbelieved. Finally they settled that the character of the Compleat Courtier should be discussed and defined. The rest of that evening and the three following ones are spent in describing that portent, who must, first and foremost, be a Noble, and then, have every physical and athletic endowment that can be thought of, and again, every mental and artistic one: this involves a discussion on the Italian language and on the

¹ The edition I have used is Venice, 1562, kindly lent to me by Mr. E. E. Bullough of Cambridge.

relative values of arms and letters, of painting and sculpture. Such is Book I. Book II discusses first the conditions in which the Courtier does what he does—the How rather than the What—his music for example he must perform as though for pastime, as if compelled, and not in the presence of the ignorant. His dress: his manner with his Prince: how, first impressions being everything, he must make his good repute precede him—and it is here that they are rebuked who seek only the name of ‘good fellow,’ ‘good companion,’ and perform the acts of horseplay mentioned above.

In fact, he ought to know so exactly what suits him, that everything that is possible for him should be easy to him, and he should be wondered at by everyone, and wonder at none himself. If he knows anything, let him make the most of it: if he knows a little of something, let him skim lightly over the subject so that people should think he knows more than he really does: if he knows nothing, let him ingenuously confess this. A certain respectable mediocrity is a great shield against envy. Finally, let him be amusing; and a discussion on Jokes follows which proves once more that no two nations, let alone ages, have an identical sense of humour. Book III concerns the qualities of the lady of the palace, together with an immense discussion of the relative values of women and of men, and also, an adaptation, it has been called, of Ovid’s *Ars Amandi* to actual conditions. The last book concerns the relations of courtier to prince and a rather Platonic discussion of the nature of government and of liberty, and finally one upon Platonic love as then understood. Bembo is responsible for this. The final question is, Are women as susceptible of divine love as men are? and Gaspare Pallavicino, a consistent woman-hater, insists that never can they so purge their breast of passion as can men, and that while many a man had experienced the divine love—as Plato, Plotinus, St. Paul, St. Francis, no woman ever had. Donna Emilia had had too much of his gibes and a slight quarrel seemed imminent, when the Duchess broke the talk off, saying they would begin again to-morrow evening. “ ‘This evening, rather,’ said Messer Cesare

Gonzaga. 'How this evening?' asked the lady duchess. 'Because,' answered Messer Cesare, 'it is already day.' And he showed them the light that was beginning to enter through the slits of the shutters. Everyone stood up in great astonishment, for the talk had not seemed to last longer than usual. So they opened the shutters on the side of the palace that looks towards Mt. Catri, and saw that in the east was born already a fair rose of dawn, and all the stars had faded except Venus, the sweet lady of the sky, who holds the confines of both night and day, and from thence it seemed that a soft breeze was blowing, that filled the air with a tingling coolness and began to awake, in the whispering woods of the hills around, the gentle notes of birds. So they flung the windows wide and went off to bed without torches."

Such is the structure of this singular book which Dr. Johnson declared to be 'the best book that was ever written upon good breeding' and which influenced not only Italy but Spain, France and England. It is true that Baldassare died just forty years before St. Aloysius was born, but he was intimately connected with the Gonzaga house, and his book must have been read and re-read in the court that by a chance bore his name, Castiglione. The charm of the book, due only in part to its innumerable anecdotes, I could not, of course, suggest here. But its atmosphere due to its mixture of coarseness, culture, naïvety, sophistication, worldliness and piety, subtlety and crude speech, of what was proper to the sixteenth century and to no other time and its amazing modernity due to Baldassare's familiarity with the motives and tendencies of unchanging human nature, is undoubtedly the atmosphere—it may be the best of the atmosphere—that was offered to the spiritual lungs of Aloysius.

Aloysius then took up residence, as we should say, in the house the Grand Duke gave him, on December 5th, 1577. Del Turco, now alone in charge, was very true to his trust. Not that it was an easy one—Rodolfo was extremely turbulent, and Aloysius had, at times, to keep the peace. He had also to do this when one of the servants insisted on quarrelling

with a cousin of the tutor's, Antonio del Turco. Aloysius used to come out, at the uproar, get the servant into his own room, and smooth the matter down. Meanwhile, from del Turco's accounts, you can learn just what the boys wore. Even when their clothes were black, they were very rich : black serge cloaks would be trimmed with black satin and black velvet and black ribbons : the stuffs for the trimming were elaborately stamped : on two such cloaks, you might expect *thirty ells* of trimming—an ell being about twenty-three inches ! They had doublets of white satin, and with white satin their breeches—slashed, I take it—were lined. With the black court clothes, they wore the nobleman's cap, black velvet lined with black sarcenet, and having two black feathers and a white one and three ells of tulle by way of decoration. A mysterious cushion occupies much space in the accounts. It was made of black velvet, with silk-sewn fringes and four black tassels : I conceive it was carried behind Aloysius by a page, when he went to court functions—above all, when he sat on marble seats in, for example, the open-air theatre of the royal gardens. This sombre court-apparel was enriched by a good deal of gold : very heavy gold and silver lace adorned the sword-belt ; the sword itself was constantly re-gilded and reposed in a velvet-covered scabbard ; the doublet was bright with golden buttons. His gloves were embroidered with flowers, and there was a special pair of shoes ' with double soles, for the Illustrious Signor,' cries del Turco in a sudden little ecstasy. The brighter clothes were apparently for everyday wear indoors. In a word, when you read of Aloysius's affection for black or dark-coloured dress, you must recall that court dress *was* black—increasingly so as the fashion for this was diffused from Spain where Philip set it—and that what was most remarkable about the young man's dress, later on, seems to have been its simplicity, and, that he refused the constant making of new clothes.

Other entries offer tiny glimpses of the life they led in Florence. They played, it is true, with tops ; but there are a number of entries concerning those clay bullets that were

then used for shooting birds with crossbows. Aloysius had a small dog, that he took about with him on, alas, a chain. Masks and fancy-dresses occur, though they appear in the somewhat later part of the book, when Aloysius was at Mantua : but the style of life in the two places was much the same, except that Aloysius will have been an even grander young man in the Gonzagan court than in the Medicean. Meanwhile, he was learning dancing, though he did not at all like, *del Turco* says, going to dances. Tips figure rather frequently, given to the sacristan of the Duomo, for example, who took him up to the top of the dome to see the view : to various servants, tradesmen, and professors, and to Don John de' Medici's dwarf, which that young gentleman kept as an object of pleasing derision, and to John himself Aloysius gave a crystal goblet on some festa. He used, we learn, a pomade, to make his black hair stick down when he went to court ; and a tooth-paste composed of dried rose-leaves and crushed pomegranate-peel, no less. Alas ! the tooth paste was none too effective. Between December, 1578 and June, 1579, Aloysius had to invoke a barber to pull two of his teeth out ; and a third had to be extracted in April, 1580. The boy, frankly, was not well. He had to have his stomach massaged, and had chilblains for which oil of mustard was prescribed. In 1579, he had to go to Lucca to take the cure—he had already visited it from Florence in 1578 to see Ferrante.¹ Better than this, two letters written by Aloysius to his father during this time—he and Rodolfo had a sort of combined seal for sealing their letters with—survive. The first relates to the funeral of the Grand Duchess Giovanna of Austria, daughter of the Emperor Maximilian II.

Most Illustrious Lord Father : Your Lordship's letter of the 6th of this month saddened us, because it said you had been distressed by gout accompanied with a little

¹ The first visit was a return one. Ferrante had been to see the boys at Florence on June 7th. : they went to Lucca on the 13th, taking five horses : the second time, Aloysius stayed nearly all September at the Baths, requiring a carriage, seven saddle mules, and one baggage mule for his return.

fever, but however that the one and the other were diminishing. Then another from our Lady Mother on the 8th consoled us, because we understood from it that you were now quite delivered. May the Divine Majesty be thanked. Yesterday we went to see the funeral of the Grand Duchess which was very fine and lasted three hours.¹ The funeral was arranged like this: First there was the banner of St. Laurence and then the Cross; and these were accompanied by 150 poor people dressed in mourning with the lighted torches. Behind these followed the Brothers, not only those of the City but all those from the neighbourhood, there were about 3,000, they were from eighteen religious orders in all, with the white candles of one pound weight. Behind these followed the mourners with the ordinary trains.² After these there followed the priests with the same candles: afterwards followed the pages, the knights and courtiers all dressed in mourning with the torches; then followed the body under the canopy, and the body was carried by noblemen of title and the canopy by gentlemen of the City. Behind this there was the Grand Duke in mantle and cap, in civil dress, with the rest of the court and the armed guard, and when he had accompanied the body to San Lorenzo, he withdrew into the palace. We continue with our devotions and studies. We are quite well. Nothing else, except in finishing we kiss your hands and also those of Her Ladyship our mother, and our little sister and brother. April, 1578. Your Most Illustrious Lordship's good son: Aluigi Gonzaga. To the Most Illustrious Lord My most respected Lord Father the Lord Marquis of Castiglione: Genoa.

Can you imagine a more direct piece of observation? Or more zest? Or less improving of the occasion? You can see that Aloysius wrote it out from the rough copy: even so,

¹ The Grand Duchess died on April 11: two or three days would have been needed to prepare the funeral: the letter then was written on April 14th or 15th. It has a label affixed '1578 di Firenze, del S. Aluigi Figliolo,' probably added by Ferrante.

² These were very long—several yards, and attached to hoods.

it has mis-spellings, and he got into difficulties with the long words, *baldacchino* and *gentiluomi*. He was truthful when he said he was 'attending to his studies.' He had studied Latin at home, and here was perfecting his Tuscan. He may already have known some French and German; and before he died, at 23, he could speak Latin, Greek, Italian, Spanish, German and French.

The second letter is more enchanting still. The Don John mentioned was the youngest and illegitimate son of the Grand Cosimo I, born May 13, 1565.

Most Illustrious Lord Father : On Sunday we were with Lord Don Giovanni on the same stand belonging to the Most Serene Grand Duke to see the race for the cloak of St. Anne which was red cloth and the race-horse of His Lordship the Count di Bagno won it. On Friday we went to Don Giovanni's and since he did not want to go out we spent the time together cooking a lot of things. But he did not eat anything at all because he was fasting for a Jubilee ordered by the Pope that absolves from guilt and penalty, though you have to pray to God that he may put His hand to these troubles of Flanders, and for the exaltation of the Holy Church, for the extirpation of heresies and the preservation of Christian Princes. And we also will take the Jubilee in the coming week and in our prayers we will remember you as we have always done and shall do for ever. Yesterday we were with Don Giovanni at the Pitti and while Don Giovanni was going with us to a fountain, the Princesses arrived and brought a number of dogs because they said they wanted to run the race of the cloak of the dogs. And while it was being run the Grand Duke came by the Garden Door with only four of his gentlemen and he stopped to look at our fun. Everyone ran, the Princesses,¹ Lord Don Giovanni, and ourselves, and the fun

¹ The two Medici princesses then in Florence were Mary, afterwards Queen of France, and Eleanor, the second wife of Aloysius's horrible young cousin Vincent Gonzaga, duke in succession to William of Mantua, then still reigning.

lasted till evening. During these holidays we have been to Mass at the Nunziata, and we prayed Him to give you every joy and content with all increase of consolation. We are well. We attend to our studies. And to conclude, I kiss Your Most Illustrious Lordship's hands. Florence, August 17th, 1578.

It is with a certain grace that Aloysius intimates that while Don John could not eat what the princesses were cooking, because of the Jubilee he was observing, *he* neither observed the Jubilee that day, nor yet abstained. And I should like to know whether Ferrante, that inveterate gambler, may not have profited a little from the information his young son could send him concerning the Florentine stables. Count Bagno lived in Mantua and was thus well-known to the Gonzagas.

I recall with gratitude that I once stood in the great pagan garden behind the Pitti palace, where Aloysius went to visit these young princes and princesses, and listened to the water pouring from the fountains as it poured so long ago. Great avenues of cypress trees make black walls on either side, as the ground sinks between them to the fountain of Neptune, at the garden's heart, where the spray drifts over a blaze of flowers among white columns and twisted iron-work and deep-blue pools. It was possible there to forget the cynical laughter of fauns and satyrs who stood, pale marble and yet alive (you really felt) the moment your back was turned, lurking among the ilex hedges, peeping from the laurels, in the upper part of the garden, all grey stone and the dark foliage. You could positively hear, down there, the shouting of those young princes and princesses, and the very barking of their dogs—and then, suddenly you realized that they all had names that you can find from history-books, and became magnificent indeed, and mostly very miserable: but that of them all, one only is able to stir, to-day, one moment of personal affection or even interest—the *one* who became a saint. The one, who became a saint, is the one who can draw men and women to listen to his tale, hundreds of years after his death, hundreds of miles away^r from where he lived: and

the others are no more than dead and dusty mummies on the shelves of libraries. So true is it that the saints have the secret of survival, and live indeed, active forces, ready to smite something of their spirit through into the souls of those who ask it.

And indeed, it was here, in this most pagan of all the courts of Italy, that Aloysius, without guessing it, put his foot upon the path that was to lead him to sanctity. Hitherto, he had been a lad who most certainly wished to fulfil the law of God, and keep from mortal sin : now, you can clearly see that he knew himself unable to do even that without 'giving his right hand to God.' as in their fine phrase they said—that is, without making God a promise on the matter. In this desire, this recognition, this choice, is to be seen throughout the guiding grace of God. What else indeed ?

For I have said something of the turbulence of his ancestry, and how fierce was the blood that ran most uncooled into his veins. As for his temperament, you will find that years after this he still sums himself up as a 'piece of twisted iron that requires to be twisted straight.' As for this actual environment of Florence, I can really not describe it in these pages. The Medici had returned to Florence amid scenes of appalling carnage : Pius V had recognized Cosimo I as first Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1567, but the title was only confirmed to Francis by the Emperor in 1576, the year before the Gonzagas' visit. Francis had not only bound himself hand and foot to Austria, but extracted such vast sums from his wretched peasantry for Philip II of Spain, that he turned whole districts of his lands, war-devastated already, into deserts, and, owing to his own blood-thirstiness and vices, sent the level of crime soaring high throughout the duchy. His sister was strangled in her bed by her husband to whom she had been faithless : his brother did the same to his wife : when, after the death of the Grand Duchess whose funeral Aloysius watched, he finally married his mistress Bianca, he soon enough died along with her on two successive days ; and since they had been entertaining Cardinal Ferdinand, the next in succession, to

dinner, the myth was almost inevitably hatched that they had by mistake eaten the poisoned food they had prepared for their guest. Recall that two of Aloysius's own brothers were destined to be murdered: his mother was to be stabbed and left bleeding to death outside Castiglione; one of his uncles was assassinated with the connivance, if not at the bidding, of Rodolfo. Into this society of fraud, of dagger and poison, of blood and sudden catastrophe, of hideous lust exalted into realms of myth by a desperate populace, Aloysius found himself plunged, knowing too that he belonged to the very caste that could do these things as by right, its victims having in practice no method of reprisal save themselves to take knife to tyrant.

Aloysius therefore began to withdraw into himself. He had no high mystical notions, but saw that he must at all costs avoid sin, and the occasions of sin. He began to excuse himself from playing games, especially with girls, and once, when he was playing forfeits, and had been caught, and was condemned to kiss the shadow of a girl who was playing too, he abruptly broke his game off, and marched out of the room. I think that there was still not a little of his personal disposition about this. He did not care, as del Turco said, how much he upset the others who were playing there too. But his was not, if I may say so, a *kissing* disposition: his hard masculinity, not to insist on his sense of personal rank, which was real, interfered between him and what appeared to be soft. Later, when by way of joke he began to be called 'woman-hater,' he said roundly that he could not stand *scent*, not even his mother's. It is true that the practice of using scent was carried to fantastic extremes: even mules were scented! even paper money. Notes exist that are said not even now to have lost the perfume with which they were impregnated. Probably Aloysius did begin to react rather relentlessly, and most boyishly, against what he disapproved and thought ridiculous. If Naples had the name of being most splendid in the fashions of its dresses, Florence was to be handed down to us as having been by far the most absurd. Even the Ferrarese and the

Mantuans—some half-century before this, it is true—but since then extravagance had but increased—had been described as paying attention to nothing so much as wearing hats with little gold fringes round them, so that they walked nodding their heads all the time and thinking that no homage could be sufficient for them. And throughout the history of dark Latins, blonde hair was prized. Ladies wore masses of yellow and white silk tresses, and as for their cosmetics, their skin disappeared beneath its crust of white and pink and lilac. A loathing for such a life began to grow up within the lad: you can see him already beginning to feel himself cross-ways in his world. And in this environment of shameless effrontery, he preserved that good and manly shyness which, we wish psychologists would remember, is as real an element in healthy nature as those lusts they prefer to insist on. There is a desire to keep the soul—just the personality, if you prefer, inviolate from attack or even interference, that expresses itself in many a physical reticence. And it may well be partly because of this, as well as owing to his consistent spirit of independence, that made him hate having footmen to undress him. As we shall have occasion to see, mere timidity, nervous prudery, was never a characteristic of his.

Indeed, when he began to go, as now, more frequently to confession, he considered that his prevalent fault was temper and a sharp tongue. He used to go to the little church belonging to the Jesuits called San Giovannino, behind that massive palace of the Medici now called the Riccardi palace. (It was pulled down and rebuilt on a vaster scale the year after he left.) The first time he went to confession to the Rector there, Francesco della Torre, he could not bring himself to confess the obscene language he had used on his return from camp at Casalmaggiore, well knowing that he need not, since he had been unaware that it was wrong. However, returning home, he decided that after all he had better make a complete confession of his life, and, when he attempted to do so, and when the confessor rebuked him severely for the words he had used, was so appalled at the abrupt vision of what he might

have become, had he continued in that line, that he was overwhelmed and could not proceed. This mental realization of what a tendency may lead to, can be compared to St. Teresa's sudden realization of what Our Lord showed her as her place in hell had she not re-orientated her whole life. Once, later on, in a moment of expansion Aloysius was talking about himself to his specially dear friend Gaspar Alpieri, and had mentioned what his faults had actually been, Alpieri exclaimed: 'You happy man!' Aloysius reddened, and was thenceforward less communicative.

What finally led up to the great decision was, a small book by Fr. Gaspar Loarte, S.J., whose death (he was rector first of the college at Genoa, then at Messina) may have added to its notoriety. It was what first gave Aloysius the idea of *thinking over* his prayers, which had been till now and in a sense went on being, for some time, entirely vocal. The book contained instructions for 'meditating' the mysteries of Our Lady's Rosary. St. Charles Borromeo was very fond of this book and advises his confessors to recommend it to their penitents. It is even conceivable that the name of the book had reached Aloysius indirectly from St. Charles, for the Cardinal had just been in Florence, though it is clear that he had not actually met his young kinsman there; and, Charles had had the Madonna of the Servite Church, the Annunziata, unveiled for him.¹ Anyhow, to this church, after reading this book, Aloysius went, and the little shrine on the left as you enter was the scene of a true crisis in his life. For it was here he made his promise, and a man like him does not break promises.

Nor do you need to have that delicate fresco of the thirteenth century unveiled in order to realize that here Our Lady makes it more easy to pray than not to pray. There are surely a few shrines in this world of which that is true: in such places you pass into a new atmosphere, and the soul

¹ The Gonzaga name blazed round the church's cupola: in 1476 the second Marquis of Mantua had given 2,000 gold florins to build the chancel.

breathes differently. Before this altar, the boy's determination not to sin expanded suddenly. He vowed indeed that he would keep himself, body and soul, untainted by the morass of vice into which he had been plunged; but the negative notion, not to sin, began to pass upwards into the desire for holiness; the hope that never would he offend His God, into the wish to serve Him and to please His stainless Mother.

It was from now on that he began to keep his eyes cast down.

You might say that with this promise, the work of Florence was done. Aloysius said afterwards that his spiritual life had been born there. The tremendous test was passed, though it still had a sort of brief appendix to be endured. From Florence, where after all Aloysius had been somewhat lost among the Medicean splendours, he was sent for by the Duke of Mantua, and in Mantua, Aloysius burned among the inmost constellation.

In Mantua, Duke William was reigning. When Francis III died in 1550, William had sent off the duchess-widow Catherine to Germany, with a gift of 20,000 scudi and a diamond worth 10,000: she then married Sigismund Augustus, King of Poland, so that when later on William married, in 1561, Eleanor of Austria, daughter of the Emperor Ferdinand, he found himself kinsman of the reigning houses of Poland, Bavaria, Tuscany, Ferrara, and already was so of France. There were just now three Gonzaga Cardinals—Hercules and Frederick, uncle and brother of Duke William, and Francis, brother of Cesare Gonzaga Guastalla, who married Camilla, sister of St. Charles. William was a small, misshapen man, but had large ideas and a level intelligence, and in 1573 was made Duke too of Monferrato, which had been restored after appalling vicissitudes, and in a ruined state, to the Gonzagas. The Duke in fact made Ferrante Gonzaga its Governor, and it was there that at this time he was still residing. At his marriage, fireworks set fire to parts of the city, and burned up most of the archives of the Commune, while the populace crowned its entertainment by sacking the Jewish houses.

Fynes Morison, Gent., who travelled through Italy in 1594–1595, just after Aloysius's death (his Itinerary was printed in 1617), was impressed by the width and cleanliness of the Mantuan streets, by its lakes covered with an infinite number of water-fowl, and by the Duke's stables with their 400 saddle-horses and 400 for coaches, and another stable outside the gates with 400 colts in it. As for his state-boat, Bucentor, it carried 200 persons, having its upper part like a banqueting house, with five communicating rooms having glazed windows : the rowers sat under these rooms, and the boat differed but little from our ' King's barge ' whether for size or magnificence. The splendour of the Mantuan palaces overwhelmed him. Marmiolo was hung with gilded leather : and Richard Lassels, Gent., whose delightful ' Voyage of Italy ' was edited and posthumously published in 1670 by ' his old friend and fellow-traveller S.W.' says that the ducal palace, one of the richest in Italy, had ' seaven changes of hangings for every room in the house '—remember how poor Mary Stuart was criticized for using more than *one* set of tapestry to brighten, if she could, the walls of her grim Scottish home ! In the palace was ' a world of rare pictures, Statues, plate, ornaments, cabinets, an *Unicorne's* horn, an Organ of *Alabaster* ; six tables, each one three foot long, the first all of *emeralds*, the second of *Turky* stones, the third of *hyacinths*, the fourth of *Saphyrs*, the fifth of *Amber*, the sixth of *Jaspar* stone.' But the Imperialists, he continues, ' swept all away.' As for the Jews, Fynes Morison tells that ' in the midst of the Citie Mantua is a large market place, wherein the Jewes have their shops, and sell all manner of wares, for all trafficke is in their hands, growing rich by the poverty of the Citizens, and being so much fauoured by the Duke, as they dwell not in any severall part of the Citie, but where they list, and in the very Market place : neither are they forced (as in other parts of Italy) to wear yellow or red caps, whereby they may be known, but onely a little piece of yellow cloth on the left side of their cloakes, so that they can hardly be distinguished from Christians, especially in their shops, where they wear no cloakes.

Such be the privileges which the Jewes have gotten by bribing . . . through the insatiable auarice of our Christian princes.' It is true that the traveller wrote with feeling—for 'being about to depart thence I was forced to take a Bill of the Customers, by which they signifie to the Guard at the gate, whether the passenger be to goe on horseback, on foote, or by coach, and what tribute he has to pay ; for which Bill a foote-man paies 3 soldi, another passenger six. Thus the Princes of Italy having small Territories doe not onely burthen their subjects with Taxes, but all strangers, and strictly take account from the exacters thereof.' And even, Lassels says that though Mantua was inaccessible save by its two long bridges, yet it was taken, seeing that (as the old Greek said) 'no town is impregnable where an Asse laden with gold can enter, or where faction keeps one gate.' William died in 1587 at Goito surrounded by his 1,500 wild animals that he kept in his park there.¹

Aloysius, and Rodolfo, went therefore to Mantua in November, 1579, and found the place no more to his taste than Florence. However, he lived in the palace of an Abbot Gonzaga, and made friends with another kinsman, Prospero Gonzaga, and used to escape to his palace, where there was a private chapel that he liked. He began to read Surio's Lives of the Saints, and continued to recite the psalms that he loved more and more. In fact, it was by way of the psalms of the Office that he seems at this moment to have allowed the idea to dawn in his mind, that he would be a priest, and hand over his position to Rodolfo. Moreover, he began to suffer from strangury, and you can imagine that the boy, in the hours of great pain that this involved, began more and more to hate the agitated life of masked dances and theatricals to which he was still obliged

¹ Goito is a small place whose history begins with an imperial diploma in 1037. Charles IV, in 1318, gave the territory to the Gonzagas. It was Lodovico Duke of Mantua who in 1461 enlarged its fortifications, and Duke William who built a superb palace there in which he died in 1587. He had a special love for this healthy and delightful place and linked it by a fine road with Mantua. It claims to have been in 1194 the birthplace of the poet Sordello whom Dante and Virgil met in Purgatory and whose name Browning uses in his great poem.

to go. The doctors put him on a severe diet. Aloysius was always a literalist, and a maximalist, so to say. He assumed that people meant what they said, as he did ; and, whatever he did, he did the most of. He dieted himself therefore to such effect that after the year during which he kept up this fast, he had cured, no doubt, his illness, but he had so injured his digestion that he never could eat, afterwards, like other people. But by then he had begun to make, literally, a virtue of necessity, and continued to eat very little for quite other reasons. Nor will anyone fail, I think, to observe how, at least at first, fasting frees the mind, and this, not for mere physical reasons. There are always in man the two centres of gravity, so to say, the bodily and the spiritual, and in proportion as the will carries you towards one of them, it is apt to remove you from the other. It was now, therefore, that he said he regarded a whole egg as a ' feast ' : you have not to imagine that this remained a normal diet with him, even when later on he fasted very rigorously on certain days. None the less, he began now to grow thin and even haggard.¹

But his mother was crying out for her sons, whom she had not seen now for three years, save for a very short visit from them when the Duke sent them to Castiglione in 1580. The boys had gone on May 3rd and had stayed with her till about mid-June. She had written desperately to Ferrante and even the Duke himself. Their father was wild with annoyance. ' By God,' he wrote on May 3rd to a Mantuan Councillor, Cavriani, ' the impatience and wants of women are intolerable ! I say this with reference to the Marchioness who has not even herself arrived in Castiglione but is likely to go off her head if the boys are not sent to her. I will write to her that His Highness will in due time satisfy her. But Rodolfo requires medical treatment, and possibly Aloysius too. Therefore I beg Your Excellency, if as a mother she has used or should use unbecoming language, to make my excuses to His Highness the Duke.' However, on that very day, the

¹Piatti, the earliest source, is clear that Aloysius's severe abstinence lasted for *one year*.

Duke had sent the two boys off. And at last they left altogether as, with the advent of the summer heats, there was a universal exodus of the Gonzagas from Mantua to their country-places. The two brothers went back, therefore, to Castiglione, and this part of Aloysius's life is over.

When I say, thus, 'part,' I know very well that in lives there are no parts precisely. The years do not even just dovetail themselves into one another : the flow is continuous. None the less, who cannot see how different is Aloysius by now, from the irrepressible small boy who went stealing gunpowder ? Irrepressible he always was : but you might already see that in his mind he was nurturing some very different vision. Already they were beginning to turn to look at him, in Florence, and not just because he was one of the starry princes of the town. What Grace has been doing with a soul, you can best judge, after all, when you see what Grace has done : a hundred interpretations might be put on the actions of a boy, before the event has proved that the call of God was disturbing him, the love of Christ entralling him. How should we, unaided, judge Aloysius, when he could not judge his own self, and for long felt no security in life ? At least we see, even in the earliest years, that he wanted to be good, and that the sense and fear of wrong were not dormant in him. Then you see how that sense and that fear developed : just enough, within himself, was granted to him, allowed in him, that he might see that nothing upheld him over the abyss save the divine hand. Then his flight became deliberate : he feared ; he started to shrink from the gorgeous and manifold temptation of the enormous pageant. But he fled, not wildly ; not without goal. He fled, not only from, but *to*. He ran to Mary, better even than the Mother he so loved, wiser than she, more powerful by far ; and to Mary entrusted his boy's life that she, who knew, and who could, might hand it on to the God whence he came, to God whither, like all created things, he needs must go. Even at Mantua he had said : ' It is better to be God's servant than the whole world's king.' Even there, he began to see that the life of camps, of courts, was one wherein

he would die, and to turn towards—well, he knew not towards what, but to something else : and he returned to Castiglione already feeling in his soul that he was not meant for what even Castiglione, let alone Mantua or Florence, could offer to him.

CHAPTER IV

“ DIRECT ME ! ”

Il arrive au point où les expédients apparaissent misérables et où il faut choisir. Homme de fidélité, il ne restera pas hors de la fidélité . . . Il faut être un homme de reniement ou un homme de fidélité . . . Mais que faire si l'objet de la fidélité ne peut être saisi, et si l'esprit reste impuissant ?

E. PSICHARI : *Voyage du Centurion.*

THE next part of Aloysius's life occupies just over a year—from the early summer of 1580 to the autumn of 1581. This was spent at Castiglione, save for the six months that were passed at Monferrato. But during the first weeks of this period great things happened to him. I have said that Fr. Loarte's book had just, as it were, made a breach in the wall between him and that communion with God that comes otherwise than through vocal prayer. Now that he had found that his mind could dwell on God, as well as his lips could speak to him, the waters came through with a rush. He could not tear himself away from prayer. He spent hours in his room, just fixing his attention with the help of a crucifix. Rooms in such houses communicated: servants passed through, from one part of the house to another, and Aloysius did not notice them. The sense of privacy seems largely denied to southerners: one servant would call another, and they would look in and watch the boy at his prayers. Partly, the attraction of God made itself so strongly felt, that Aloysius had nothing to do save to yield to it: at other times, afraid lest he should lose the new and divine experience, he deliberately shut himself off from talk or other forms of activity.

I doubt, however, whether Aloysius would ever have been able to tolerate what was disorderly. His prayer was not

that : but, he put, at first, no actual order in the things he chose to meditate upon. He floated, or was plunging, as it were, without advancing, in an immeasurable sea. Fortunately, he found, about this time, a small book by Peter Canisius—presumably the edition that had appeared two years before, in Mantua. It was a *Summa*, or synopsis of Christian doctrine, for use in schools, and at the end were ‘meditations for every day,’ together with a very short introduction to the topic of mental prayer. When you know the extreme clarity and balanced good sense of all that Canisius wrote, and the very nature of the book, which was not even devotional but instructive, and the firm good reason of the whole of the method of the meditations it contains, you are the more interested to hear that Aloysius said he liked it because he considered it ‘suited his character.’ Moreover, the tendency to shut himself up was checked and endured but little, for almost at the same time he found another book, relating the dramatic exploits of the pioneer missionaries in India. It was called ‘Lettere delle Indie,’ and appeared first in Spanish, then in Italian. From this time forward, Aloysius never forgot the foreign missions, and intensely desired to be sent to them. Refusing, again characteristically, to lull himself with dreams, he turned his hand to the nearest task, which may have been scarcely less necessary than teaching pagans—he began to explain the catechism to the small street-boys of Castiglione, and indeed his influence went this way and that throughout the town, and the citizens found themselves responding almost before they were aware. Hence not even for a brief while was Aloysius engulfed in the bottomless pit of religious sentimentalism : nor even from the outset was his spiritual joy a selfish one.

But an immense help now reached him through the arrival in Castiglione of Charles Borromeo, Cardinal Archbishop of Milan, who as Apostolic Visitor was travelling through the district.

The career of this wonderful man has many points of contact with that of his young kinsman, for the Borromeos were,

as I have said, closely allied with the Gonzagas. The Buonromei emigrated about 1350 from Tuscany to Milan, and became famous in the service of the Visconti. In 1147 Filippo Maria Visconti gave to Vitaliano Borromeo the fief of the Rock of Arona on the Lago Maggiore where Charles was born in October, 1538. His father was Giberto II Borromeo, and his mother, Margherita de' Medici. The family fortunes soon soared higher still, for her brother Giovanni Angelo was in the December of 1559 elected Pope as Pius IV. Immediately Pius summoned Charles to Rome, whither his brother Federigo had hastened; and Charles arrived on January 6th, the very day on which Pius had nominated Federigo commander-in-chief of all the papal forces. By the end of the month, Charles was cardinal, being aged twenty; and forthwith welcomed or promoted a series of illustrious marriages among all his sisters. His sister Camilla was that year married to Cesare Gonzaga prince of Molfetta and Guastalla: Federigo married Virginia della Rovere, daughter of the Duke of Urbino; somewhat later their sister Anna married the eldest son of Marco Antonio Colonna, the hero of Lepanto: Geronima, a child barely ten years old, was affianced, but secretly, and by proxy, with Fabrizio Gesualdo prince of Venosa in the kingdom of Naples. Ortensia was no less well disposed of. Throughout, the Cardinal-nephew showed the greatest determination that the dowries should be good, and was no less careful about coats of arms. But the man who, at the University of Pavia, had felt deeply humiliated because the short allowance on which his father kept him had not permitted him to dress his retinue as grandly as he would have wished, had, at the behest of his entire family, including his elder brother, carried through most difficult negotiations concerning the castle of Arona, claimed both by the Spaniards and the French, being at the time just over twenty; so no wonder that less than a year later, Pius made him within a fortnight of his arrival in Rome Administrator of all the Papal States, an appointment followed by many more of the utmost importance. And a week after Charles had received

the red hat, the Cardinal-nephew found himself appointed to the archiepiscopal see of Milan and in less than a year endowed by the Pope with 1,000 golden crowns, as yearly revenue, from the see of Ferrara. Incredible complications were introduced by the death of Federigo in 1562. Charles, papal secretary of state, found himself head of the family. Even the Pope joined with the entreaties of the Borromei, that he should renounce the ecclesiastical career and follow the layman's life. Months of anxious self-examination followed: but in September, 1563, Charles, to cut the knot, had himself secretly ordained priest, said his first Mass in St. Peter's, and his second at the altar of St. Ignatius, whom he venerated profoundly and whose Exercises had decided this choice. In December he was consecrated bishop in the Sistine chapel: early next year, he received the archbishop's pallium.

There is no need to describe in detail the educational, administrative and reforming work to which the Cardinal now devoted himself. It was not till 1565, almost two years after his consecration, that he could at last enter his city—Milan had not seen her archbishop for eighty years! But the life of personal poverty and austerity to which the great prelate now dedicated himself, was known to all. He seemed the ideal archbishop according to the mind of that council of Trent with whose resumption after a break of ten years he had so much to do. Nor need I relate his adventures, such as the two efforts made to assassinate him, first by the canons of a collegiate church, then by a member of a religious order he had been trying to reform. What the world rang with was his heroic service during the plague of 1576, which had been led up to by the appalling famine of 1571. It was only four years after that plague that he and Aloysius met; and Aloysius cannot but have been profoundly impressed by what he heard about the Cardinal, and who can doubt but that the memory of that heroism returned to the young man's mind, when, eleven years later, he was to have his own great opportunity? Already, unconsciously enough, he had imitated Charles in one point! When, as a lad, Charles was ill, he cured himself by

fasting, so much so, that 'the Cardinal's medicine' came to mean, later on, just doing without food. The relations between the Cardinal and the Gonzagas had remained close. Whenever Charles went between Milan and Rome, he turned aside to stay with his brother-in-law, Cesare Gonzaga, at his castle of Guastalla, and in fact assisted that young man to die.

The Cardinal's own view of rank can be seen from the conclusion of a sermon he preached on the feast of Our Lady's Nativity in 1584, when he explained the insertion of her pedigree, by the evangelists, as follows: 'Noble birth is a gift and a grace from God. We ought not to despise this benefit. It would be ingratitude. Noble blood is a powerful stimulus to the practice of virtue and a great bridle upon vice. For in a nobleman, vice is the more hateful: but also, virtue shines with a greater lustre, and resembles a jewel set in gold: the gem shines forth far more brightly, than if it were but bound about with silver.'

Aloysius, however, found in Borromeo a man who was living more and more simply, and who in fact arrived at Castiglione with a train of only seven persons, and who refused to lodge in the castle that Donna Marta at once put at his disposal. He resided with the parish priest, and there Aloysius visited him. Borromeo was delighted with the boy, who was then twelve years old, and kept him so long in conversation that the crowd that remained expectant in the ante-chamber grew impatient. But the Cardinal had found out that Aloysius had not so much as made his first Communion. He rapidly instructed the boy who needed after all but little of such teaching, gracefully asked leave of the parish priest and gave Aloysius himself for the first time the Bread of Life. He also told him to study carefully the Catechism of the Council of Trent, which he admired almost immoderately, for, in reaction against his early days when his love for the pagan classics had been intense, and when on his arrival at Rome he had at once joined in instituting an 'Academy,' which wrote essays called 'Noctes Vaticanæ,' he had thought

of substituting this Catechism altogether, in such schools as he could control, for classical writers. However, this plan did not work, and he abandoned it. Aloysius however retained a sincere love for the book, and constantly read it and recommended it later on.

It is certain that from this time forward, Holy Communion became the central point of the boy's weeks. He looked forward to it, and back to it, and sought to receive it every Sunday and feast day; and even at those week-day Masses, where he assisted without receiving Communion sacramentally, tears began now to run down his cheeks when the Body and the Blood of Christ were lifted up before him.

St. Charles was fond of the Society of Jesus, though he had not a few differences of opinion with its members. Some of these were inevitable, and sprang from the very fact that Charles, holding that they gave the best education then available, used them for his seminaries, and was upset, naturally enough, to see that vocations among the seminarists began to lead the young men towards the Society rather than to his own secular clergy. Others were mere affairs of minutiae; others more serious, as when a Jesuit father took sides with some official against the Cardinal and even preached sermons against him. Alone of his townsfolk, the Cardinal held his peace concerning this, till at long last he was forced to write to Rome, choosing, when he did so, a Cardinal known for his affection for the Society, to settle the matter. There were several points in which he wished the Jesuit system changed, and had a candidate of his own for the Generalate when, as a matter of fact, Claudius Acquaviva was elected. Yet he practically always had Jesuits for his confessors; he sedulously encouraged the use of the Spiritual Exercises; his last letter was one to recommend the Fathers of the Brera, and his last Mass was said in their noviciate that he had inaugurated at Arona, and he gave Communion, for the last time, to the novices there. This happened in the autumn of the year in which Aloysius came to Milan. Peace between the Archbishop and the Society had reigned since 1579.

The Cardinal died in 1584, being not yet fifty years old. A more noble life, in all its many departments, can scarcely be conceived. He had much to do with England; and it is interesting to know that one of his staff was Dr. Lewis Owen, fellow of New College, Oxford, who was afterwards a bishop in Calabria. Aloysius was far from unlike Charles. The Borromeos had all of them a very large nose, and in the Cardinal this feature was almost exaggerated. Both in the shape of his nose and in that of his skull, which had plenty of room at the back for brains, Aloysius markedly resembled St. Charles. This was at once noticed.

Unless I err, the joy of prayer and the grace of Communion were thus given to Aloysius, because his fight was just about to begin, and what was worse, a fumbling fight, for he did not know what he was fighting for, save freedom. But freedom into what? He knew that God did not wish him merely *not* to do wrong. If his soul was to be white and innocent, it should not be the mere dead white that chalk is, but the glowing white of molten metal! He was certain that he was not to live a life of being served; but how he should serve, not for long could he see. But he had found that you need not merely read prayers to God: you can tell Him what you have in your heart and in your head, and in a moment you shall see in what words Aloysius told God that.

Even these few months had been broken into by a visit with his mother to Christina, daughter of the king of Denmark, and duchess of Lorraine owing to a second marriage after her first husband, Duke Sforza of Milan, had died. She had been suggested as wife for Henry VIII of England, but remarked, with an aplomb that must have pleased the robust monarch if ever he heard it, that she had but one neck. So the match never came off, despite the charming portrait presumably painted by Holbein in view of it, and now in possession of the Duke of Norfolk. Tortona had been left to her by her first husband, and hither she now came with her daughter Dorothea, wife of Eric II Duke of Brunswick. That maturity which again and again has to be commented on in

the brief career of Aloysius, impressed the whole of her little court.

But immediately after this, his father summoned him, along with his mother and Rodolfo, to Monferrato where he still was. The journey was adventurous. The Ticino, which they had to cross, was flooded. The carriage in which Donna Marta drove, and the other carriages, got safe across. That in which the two boys were riding, broke in half in midstream. These carriages, I think, were still of the curious barrel-shape which makes this intelligible. The horses, with the front part of the carriage, in which Rodolfo was sitting, scrambled to the far bank and were saved. The back part, containing Aloysius and his tutor, was swept down stream, but happily stuck in the branches of a large tree that had been carried down the river by the flood. In this frightful predicament they sat, till a man, who knew the river, rescued first Aloysius, then the tutor, on a horse. Panic sped on before them : Donna Marta turned back in great misery, only to meet her son galloping up the road : but the tale had even reached the Marquis at Monferrato, who sent a courier to find out the facts, and the reunion that evening was a happy one. At Monferrato, Aloysius was to stay over six months, and it was here that he began to experience his father's wrath.

That he stuck to his studies, read Seneca, Plutarch, and Valerius Maximus, Ferrante could not much quarrel with though a father is apt to be a little afraid of a too-learned son. That Aloysius haunted the church and even the Community of the Fathers of St. Paul, or Barnabites, did not much perturb him, if he knew of it : Aloysius said he found them so cheerful, and their house seemed to him so enchantingly 'regular' compared to his home, which indeed, containing not only the irascible Marquis, but Rodolfo, may well have been tolerably chaotic, especially as Aloysius was being made thus to travel to and fro, across half north Italy, at such brief intervals, over atrocious roads, in carriages liable to break in the middle of rivers. But certainly Ferrante did not foresee

the full influence the Barnabites or the Capuchins would have upon his son.

But what exasperated Ferrante was that the boy refused to take part in the various balls, dinners and plays with which the new Governor kept his state up. Monferrato was only too likely to cross over to whatever Power was not at the time controlling it, and such festivities impressed the populace. Aloysius refused point-blank to go to plays: the most he would do was to escort his mother to the houses where they were given, see her safely to her place, and then return later on to call for her. This must have seemed peculiarly perverse to Ferrante, since play-acting, along with horse-breeding, was one of the Gonzaga specialities, and in fact it was they who invented what has become normal amongst us—fixed theatrical companies. At least, by keeping three or four such companies on foot^{at} Mantua, and lending them about to the European courts, they made them everywhere known and imitated.

Italian comedians reached France so early as the reign of Francis I. In 1548 they were actually summoned to perform at Lyons before Henri II and Catherine de' Medici. Under Charles IX the practice becomes regularized, the kind of Comedy represented being usually *commedia dell' arte* or *all' improvviso*, contrasted with the *commedia sostenuta*, which was on the lines of classical drama. A troupe of Italian comedians appeared in Paris, by order, in 1571, to celebrate the 'entrée' of Charles IX after his marriage. Their chief patron was without doubt Ludovico Gonzaga, Duke of Nevers, who had obtained that title by marrying Henriette de Clèves, whose brothers died without children. He was the son of Ferdinand, Duke of Mantua and Margaret Paleologa, through whom the marquissate of Monferrato came to the Gonzagas, and his elder brother was then reigning in Mantua. Queen Elizabeth's ambassador, Lord Buckhurst, tells how 'the 4th of this month the King procures the Duke de Nevers to invite me to dinner where we found a sumptuous feste and of gret honour adorned wt musick of a most excellent and strange conserte, and wt a Comedie of Italians that for the good mirth

and handling thereof deserved singular comendacion.' The King developed the taste for the theatre, and, as Walsingham writes in 1572 to Burghley, had continual dramatic performances during the three weeks that he periodically devoted to dieting himself, during which he abstained from his usual ferocious exercise and from state matters. Lord Lincoln, ambassador extraordinary of Elizabeth, was superbly entertained that same year, in Paris, by the Italian troupe. In fact, within a day or two of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, Charles wrote to his own ambassador, de la Mothe-Fénelon Salignac, to tell Elizabeth of the marriage festivities of the King of Navarre and Marguerite de Valois in which the Italian performances filled a great rôle, 'festivities in which all my subjects enjoy themselves without distinction.' From France the same actors went to Spain. Henri III summoned the company known as the Gelosi from Italy in 1574, having seen them at Venice, and among them the actress Vittoria, who was reducing spectators to a state of helpless ecstasy: 'beauteous witch of love,' writes one of them, 'who fascinates the hearts of a thousand lovers with her words, that sweet Siren who with suave spells enthralls the souls of her devout spectators.' The ambassador of the Duke of Mantua was of the greatest assistance to him, though the Gelosi did not arrive till January 1577. Their success was immediate, though the court preacher announced, in the presence of the King, that no one ought to attend the 'Pastoral' they acted. The Parliament, always antipathetic to these foreigners, now announced that the comedies were but 'scurrility and adulteries and merely served as a school of debauchery for young folks of either sex in the city of Paris.' This same year, Italian actors, quite probably the same company, or part of it, came to amuse Elizabeth at Windsor. But no doubt it was under Henri IV that the Gonzaga companies—with names like the *Confidenti*, the *Accesi* (the Firebrands), had their greatest success, especially when the King married Maria de' Medici. The Harlequin of the time was the first of this sort of actor to permit himself familiarities with kings unparalleled since the 'fools' of earlier

days. Henri actually wrote to him personally ; the Harlequin, who was really witty after a Rabelaisian sort, addressed impertinent documents to the King, but also tried (so at least the victim wrote to the Duke of Mantua) to have one of his fellow-actors assassinated, for which reason this unfortunate man decided to leave the troupe. The violence of the contrast between this improvised comedy and contemporary French drama, which appears almost wholly derived, as to subject-matter, from the Scriptures, must have been startling enough. The Queen being sister of Eleonora, Duchess of Mantua, and Vincent I (p. 117) being now Duke, and more devoted than ever to the stage, the correspondence between France and Mantua became more close than ever. The Duke was all that was most complaisant, sending all whom he could spare, but excusing himself, in 1607, because three of the actresses were going to have babies. In 1608, Vincent Gonzaga, third son of the reigning prince, himself came to Fontainebleau, and somewhat later, Duke Vincent himself arrived. He was not only the King's brother-in-law, but his mother was of the House of Austria, his wife of that of Medici, his sister had married the last Duke of Ferrara, his eldest son the Princess of Savoy, his daughter, the Prince of Lorraine, and his second son was a cardinal. If I say no more about the Gonzaga companies of comedians, it is because Cardinal Ferdinand Gonzaga, his second son, who for some time had been corresponding actively with the French royalties, succeeded to the Duchy of Mantua in 1612, laid aside the cardinalate, married, and became the next Duke, reigned after the death of Aloysius. And in fact, no further documents concerning this topic seem forthcoming after 1624 ; and in 1630, after an appalling experience of siege, famine and plague, Mantua was sacked by the imperial forces.¹

Aloysius then may be forgiven for refusing to attend what the French Parliament considered to be a high-school of adultery. It is a comment on the times that Donna Marta went

¹ All the references needed will be found in *Les Comédiens Italiens à la Cour de France* : A. Baschet : Paris, 1882.

to the plays, and there is a certain charm about Aloysius's remark, later on, when he was already a Jesuit, and when Duke Vincent invited him to a comedy—he said he was afraid that his lay-brother companion might be shocked. . . . But that was years hence.

He used to go out, as I said, to the Barnabite and the Capuchin convents, and the poor Barnabites began to think he was certain to join themselves. But Aloysius was far from sure about anything save that the life of the three vows attracted him so much that some day, surely, he must embrace it. He told his friends, afterwards, some of the thoughts that passed through his head and moved him at that time. It was the transitoriness of what most men seek, that impressed him. The struggle for honours seemed to him quite mad : and the methods of wringing wealth from the poor, wicked. The Barnabites, on the other hand, were but acting, it seemed to him, as sane men should act, if once they saw the difference between time and eternity. It would avail but little if he merely abdicated, and transferred the government of his estates to Rodolfo, and went on living at home. Life with Rodolfo ! All day long he would be seeing what should not be—Aloysius had never the least illusion about Rodolfo. One might even ask how, knowing Rodolfo as he did, he did not feel the responsibility of handing his position over to him to be too great. Frankly, I think he felt pretty sure that Rodolfo would not survive very long. Assassination was the speedy doom of such young princes, if to ordinary vices they added, as he would, excessive turbulence. Aloysius pinned all his hopes to his second brother, Francis. Once, when Francis and some pages were playing in Aloysius's room, and making a great noise, Donna Marta came up, very anxious, to make sure that Francis was not getting hurt. ' Francis,' said Aloysius, ' is quite able to look after himself. In fact,' he added, ' we shall all of us have to look to Francis.' His mind, then, was definitely moving towards that religious life of which the idea had just dawned at Mantua. Even the priesthood, in his position, he surmised would be too dangerous. I am

fairly sure that the long speech that Cepari here puts into his mouth contains thoughts that did not become nearly so explicit till somewhat later, when he was in Spain. But it is usual for such ideas to appear gradually, like a dawn a cloudy sky.

After this somewhat stormy interlude, which finished with the Marquis's term of office at Monferrato, the family returned to Castiglione, and I think you can see that Aloysius was definitely unhappy. He strikes me as being like a man in a suffocating jungle, struggling to find his way into the light and the air, yet not knowing in which direction they lie, nor where to begin hacking his way through. This is the period when, boy-like, he said he could simply not understand why everyone in the world did not become a Religious. Now too he used those rhetorical phrases that came, it seems to me, straight from the sort of Latin books he had been reading—'Why should we value Family? The ashes of a prince are no different from a pauper's, unless it be that they reek more vilely.' Like St. Ignatius in the early days of his fervour, he piled up his penances and tried to surpass himself. He ate next to nothing, and fasted on Wednesdays, on Saturdays in honour of Our Lady, and on Fridays on bread and water—three slices of bread in the morning, and toast and water for supper: nothing else—in honour of the Passion. He decided what was sufficient to maintain life, and that anything else would be superfluous, and ordered his food to be served to him by weight. His special footman and his special carver had much to say, later on, upon this subject. He began to flog himself, using his dogs' leashes; he tied his spurs round his waist: he put pieces of wood in his bed: his sheets used to be found all blood-stained. As for his prayer, it was constant: he meditated now regularly for an hour on rising; he heard, and when possible served, more than one Mass daily; he used to rise in the middle of the night and pray, kneeling unsupported on the tiles of his floor, wearing only his night-shirt. This, in the bitter cold of a Lombard winter, was perhaps his most dangerous penance, unless it were his habit of preserving, so far as possible, some scene, such as that of the Pas sion

before his imagination all day long, so that his occupations should not really interfere with prayer. Hence the beginning of those headaches that lasted his life through. It was now that the accident so often read of in such lives occurred. He had gone to bed, and then remembered he had not said, as usual, the seven 'penitential' psalms. He lit his candle, and for once, consented to say them in bed. Half-way through, he fell asleep. The candle guttered or fell over, and set fire to the curtains of the alcove, the coverlets, and the straw mattress. Aloysius half woke up, and either because the smoke half-stupefied him, or because he was too tired to wake up properly, for some time noticed that he was hot and uncomfortable, and put it down to not being well. At last he realized the facts: he sprang from his bed, shouting for help, and at the moment the bed burst into a blaze. The valet, who slept outside his door, rushed in; so did the soldiers on guard; and between them they heaved the entire bed out of the window into the castle moat.

Everyone can realize how terribly dangerous is such a life for a boy—not indeed because he may set fire to his bed, or catch cold, or even injure his digestion, get blood-poisoning, or a thousand other material things, but, because being utterly undirected he may make every mistake, especially spiritual, as St. Ignatius is never tired of insisting. Even physically, such concentration may exhaust the brain, or the nervous system; reaction follows, and every incapacity for doing even the ordinary things of life. Pride may swell within the soul, and Aloysius confessed frankly that conceit was one of his temptations. When later on he will set himself the task of meditating for an hour without distraction, fail and fail and then finally succeed, small wonder if it should occur to him that he had carried off a fine victory. Obstinacy may exist, caricaturing strength of will; violence may replace determination; and above all, reliance even on genuine will, 'my will-power,' may involve sooner or later and indeed provoke one of those sensational collapses of, precisely, the will; and the experience of everyday life, and the judgment of theologians themselves,

combine to assert that a man can hardly, if at all, carry through perseveringly even the ordinary laws of a good life, without God's Grace, let alone a life of transcendent difficulty. A man may be willing even good things, even things like prayer, or self-denial, or forms of work, which God does not in the least intend for him. A profound humility is needed for a man easily to give up those good and spiritual things which God does not want him to have, or to do, or not at present, or not in this way or in that. A false mysticism too may result from such passionate individualism.

The salvation, dare I say, of Aloysius consisted in his unremitting prayer to God—'Direct me.' 'Direct me for the best.' Month after month he prayed thus, meaning it with all his heart, proving thereby that he knew he did not know: was sure he was unsure: threw his whole weight on God: tried to do his utmost in the simple ways that suggested themselves—avoiding occasions of sin: praying: doing penance; and, given that it was Aloysius, trying to avoid *all* that might possibly be, or become, an occasion of sin; praying a very great deal, for naturally, sheer amount of prayer seems at first quite as important as its quality, or at least, must be the outward expression of interior intensity; and doing all the penance that the body could support, if any at all were desirable. Why put limits? why draw the line here, when I find I can go much further? Boys can be madly generous; and remorselessly logical: they can be almost morbidly in love with self-sacrifice, and that is where direction is so much needed—normally, the direction of some wise priest or friend who understands human nature, and this individual piece of human nature; when no such friend or guide is to be found, God will act immediately, if but He be given His chance, and given it seriously. Aloysius gave it, and re-gave it. 'Direct me; direct me.' And he acknowledged that God never played him false. Out of every blind alley of his life, God made a way. Not only He protected Aloysius amid the dangers attendant on his high hazardous enterprise—and the greater the soul and the higher the aim, the more dangerous

the path ; but it was God who called him to that adventure, and owed to him, if I dare say so, all the graces needed by the way. Aloysius owned, afterwards, to 'mistakes' ; but they were those of an inexperienced, generous application, in detail, of a principle perfectly pure.

CHAPTER V

LA GONZAGHINA

*Jube, lapis absolvetur,
Jube, vitta disrumpetur ;
Exiturus nescit moras
Cum proclamas : Exi foras !
In hoc salo mea ratis
Infestatur a piratis ;
Hinc assultus, inde fluctus,
Hinc et inde mors et luctus.
Sed tu, Bone Nauta, veni;
Preme ventos, mare leni ;
Fac abscedant hi piratae,
Duc ad portum salva rate.*

Hildebert of Tours : *Extra portam.*

THIS part of his life came to an abrupt end in 1581. In that year, incomparably the greatest lady in Europe, Mary of Austria, daughter of the Emperor Charles V, widow of the Emperor Maximilian II, daughter-in-law of Emperor Ferdinand I, mother of Emperor Rodolfo II, decided to go to visit her brother, Philip II of Spain. To make her journey more magnificent she resolved to take with her those great Italian princes who owed allegiance to the Spanish court. Philip proposed to assign to her the government of Portugal, which he claimed since the previous year, as she, a granddaughter of King Manuel of Portugal, might be trusted to recommend his rule there. Besides this, Mary was unhappy in Austria, where it looked as if heresy might gain ground, and, the death of Philip's wife made it desirable that a lady able to take the highest place should be present in the peninsula. Philip himself was pleased at anything that bound Italian princes still more closely to him, at the expense, naturally, of France: and these princes were delighted to make use of any opportunity of sunning themselves in a court that eclipsed even Prague. Ferrante therefore gave orders that the entire household should prepare to migrate to Spain.

Since it was in Spain that Aloysius was definitely to emerge, not into peace, but into a clear vision of his destiny and his path towards it, I regard this journey as the great crisis of his career. I have felt, and said, that hitherto he had been in a sort of jungle : by many allusions to the life that surrounded him, I have not hesitated to produce almost a sense of that confusion and bewilderment that were his, and must be to a yet higher degree that of ourselves who try to study him. Not only from five years old onward was the boy hustled from camp to court, and then from one court to another, but he was subjected to that ' *éducation de prince* ' which at almost any time may be, and at that time emphatically was, a spiritual disintegration almost wantonly engineered. Only at the beginning was Donna Marta with him for any length of time, to sweeten by the purity of her presence the extreme of licence that surrounded him : del Turco had been dispensed with after Florence, and with him went the only steadying influence in the place. It is a marvel that Aloysius did not take many more short cuts by way of sweeping, inexperienced generalizations, condemnations, resolutions : it is wonderful that he did not make many more individual mistakes. Indeed God had directed him. He was now to have one new chance of help—del Turco was to be re-called and to accompany the family to Spain. To Aloysius was given the duty of acquainting him with this.

He had already written a charming little letter, in May, to del Turco, who evidently had been afraid Aloysius might have been angered by some rebuke he had had occasion to address to him :

Honoured Dearest Friend,

I have received your letter which was a great delight to me, but I was very sorry you thought I could be so silly as to get angry or to hate you because of your words which ought only to make me fonder of you. I do not feel so, and I never shall, but wherever I am I shall always and always remember you. I have given 75 *soldini*, for which I am in your debt, to your brother : if there is more, let me know.

In conclusion, I commend myself to you, messer Jacopo, messer Bastiano, madonna Maria, Giovannino, and Agnolino. Castiglione, May 21, 1581. Your servant, Aluigi Gonzaga.¹

He now wrote :

Very honoured, Dearest Friend,

I have already written to you two letters, one via Mantua, the other via Venice ; but since I, who am so anxious for your coming, am in doubt about them, I decided to beg you by this third one, through our Peter (who made 50 jumps when he heard the news), not to fail to come, but to start so soon as possible ; and I promise you that my Lord Father will much appreciate your coming and that all of us, especially messer Don Julio and I, look forward to it. Castiglione, June 1, at 1 of the night (i.e., one hour before dark), 1581.

Fr. Meschler thinks that this letter was written after the next two, because they clearly convey the news to del Turco which in this letter is regarded as known. In that case Aloysius will have made a slip in the date, which he does more than once, and will have written June instead of July. This is the more likely as he was writing late p.m. and in a hurry. ' Peter's ' delight was more at the taking of the letter, I expect, than at the possibility of del Turco's coming, for that, by now, cannot have been a surprise. It is of course conceivable that the letter refers to a quite different visit. ' Messer Don Julio ' is Aloysius's Latin master, Bresciani.

The other two letters, written before the one just quoted, if the correction in the date is justified, are as follows :

¹ Jacopo was del Turco's cousin : Bastiano, Jacopo's son ; Maria, Bastiano's wife : Giovannino and Agnolino their little children. The value of a *soldino* varied locally : it was roughly one lira. The word translated *honoured* is *magnifico* in abbreviation, expanded in previous editions of the letters into *maestro*, *master*. Fr. Rosa, thinking that Aloysius cannot have been guilty of any real *fault* demanding rebuke, surmises that del Turco must have expostulated with him (as indeed he did) about his fasting. The household also thought it exaggerated ; but observing Aloysius's reasonableness in all else, let him have his way in this too. Besides, criticism left him obdurate.

Much Honoured and Dearest Friend,

We are soon going to Spain with the Empress, and so my Lady Mother and I begged my Lord Father to allow you, who have been my tutor till now, to continue to be so for the future ; he most willingly granted us this, and showed how much he would appreciate it. So I beg you to decide to come at once, or at least to decide at once and start quick after deciding. For any expense for the journey will be made good directly you arrive. In conclusion, Signor Luigi Pignalosa and I kiss your hands. Castiglione, June 23, 1581 : your servant, Aluigi Gonzaga.

Very Honoured Dearest Friend,

Though I wrote to you 3 days ago yet fearing I may not have addressed it properly I want in this further letter to pray you again to come so soon as possible : I assure you that my Lord Father will appreciate that you, who have been our tutor so far, should be so in this voyage too. The voyage is for Spain ; and we expect to start any day, so my Lord Father does not wish you to delay a moment but to come at once, promising you that directly you have arrived you shall have the money you have spent on the journey. With this I conclude and commend myself to all, and beg you to perform due salutation to His Lordship Don John in my name. Castiglione, June 25, 1581. Your servant, Aluigi Gonzaga.

Don John is the illegitimate son of Duke Cosimo, as we have said above.

Whether del Turco came or not, we hear no more of him. He was afterwards tutor to Don John and then Don Antonio de' Medici. He died on January 19th, 1618, and was buried in the family tomb at San Marco in Florence. The Marquis, his wife, Aloysius, Rodolfo, Francis, Isabella and Cristierno left Castiglione and joined the Empress at any rate at Verona. They may have done so at Padua on September 26th. Donna Marta at any rate then writes to Mantua. The Marquis does so on September 30th from Verona : he could not visit the

Duke—the Empress was *exigeante*. The cortege proceeded to Brescia and Lodi, where Charles Borromeo came to greet her, said Mass, and gave her Holy Communion. Thus Aloysius once more met his kinsman. They then went on to Genoa.¹

Admiral Doria took command of the fleet and they sailed on November 8th, 1581, having been held up by storms since October 16th. By an amazing chance, the Empress took with her as chaplain the Portuguese priest who advised St. Stanislaus Kostka, when at Vienna, to run away; and this same priest had been for a while confessor to Blessed Edmund Campion when he was at Prague in exile. He cannot then have failed to learn from Campion, and to relate to the two ardent young men whom he had had in his spiritual charge, much that concerned the tragedy of our land. Add, that Aloysius learnt Spanish during this voyage, and that it was broken more than once—first at Marseilles, whence everyone went to visit the relic of St. Mary Magdalen in the convent of St. Maximin one day distant, and climbed to see her cave called La Ste Baume, on the north side of the ridge that shuts Provence off from the sea-coast. Perhaps it was here, on that desolate little shelf, in the mountain-side, and in the cave, with its incessantly dripping roof, that Aloysius began to feel his lasting devotion to the Magdalen. On leaving this, they touched at Collioura, and continued by land by Barcelona and

¹ Another letter exists, purporting to have been written by Aloysius about this time. It is addressed to the Duchess of Guastalla, Camilla daughter of Gilbert, Count of Arona, brother of St. Charles. It reads as follows:

Most Serene Lady and my Most Respected Aunt,

In wishing all possible happiness to Your Highness, as I do, for the coming feast of Christmas, I am satisfying my duty towards you and my desire to see you always happy. May your Highness's good courtesy accept this duty I owe to your merits and give me in return a proof of this by your orders, while I remain kissing affectionately your hands, Mantua, Dec. 18, 1581.—Your Nephew and Servant, Aluigi Gonzaga.

It is thought by some that this is a forgery, not only because the script is more clumsy, or at least school-boyish, than Aloysius's usual one, but because he had already sailed by that date and could not have written from Mantua. It is hard to see why anyone should have thought it worth forging so colourless a note, and perhaps Aloysius wrote this the year before and dated it wrong.

Saragossa, where Our Lady of the Pillar is; and went too to Monserrat, though I doubt whether that now Ignatian shrine yet conveyed much to Aloysius of special; and perhaps to Alcalà. In the midst of this turmoil Aloysius remained quiet and collected, and already impressed the Empress deeply. On March 7th, 1582, they arrived at Madrid, and Aloysius was there at once established in the royal palace.

Aloysius, at Madrid, found himself in a completely different atmosphere from that of the Italian courts. Ossification rather than liquefaction might be alleged against it. I mean, you would have found there a towering pride; a rigidity of etiquette that provoked more bloodshed, owing to infringements that implied an insult, than can well be imagined; an exorbitant magnificence of dress that continually occasioned sumptuary laws as useless as such things always are, and as they always must be if they enter into such inquisitorial details as the Spanish ones did: idleness brought to the pitch of a fine art; insane devotion to gambling; and of course a stately sort of immorality. This pride, personal, ancestral, and national, was of the highest utility but swayed none the less from the sublime to the absurd, and showed itself then and long afterwards in the most complete intolerance of all manners that were not Spanish. It has been said that Spain was proud; France vain; and Italy conceited. But this very pride, which simply forbade a Spaniard to borrow from other lands, served to keep the people intact from the infection of the Italian renaissance as from the Teuton anarchism. The succulent putrefaction of Italian classicism, no less than the shapeless sentimentalism of German reformers, would have seemed disgusting to the sons of noblemen whose lives were strait-waistcoated in tradition and, moreover, increasingly confined within the outlines set by an absolutist Court. The gravity of Aloysius, his perfection of good manners within a somewhat stately mien, were far less clashing, so to say, with his environment than they must have been in Italy, or would have been in France. The coarser North would, I think, just have offended his ideas of educated taste.

Ferrante and the rest of the family had remained behind at Saragossa when the expedition left it on February 10th, because he had gout. But without waiting for him, Aloysius was at once made page of the first class, which meant that he attended ceremonially on Don Diego, prince of the Asturias and heir-apparent, and also did all his studies along with him. With him, too, he paid a daily visit to the Empress till she went to Portugal about the beginning of March. The King was there himself at that time. Ferrante however had arrived in the first part of May, for in mid-May Aloysius mentions him as having recently followed the King to Lisbon.

He wrote to his uncle Orazio Gonzaga :

Illustrious Lord Uncle,

I would often have written to Your Lordship had I not been deterred by not feeling sure whether the letters would reach you since I did not feel certain how to address them, not knowing where Your Lordship was, and had not the occupations at the side of our Most Serene Lord (Don Diego), in whose service my Lord Father wishes us to be always most assiduous, detained me. But at last fearing lest my great and unmeasured delay might make me fall into some suspicion of negligence with Your Lordship, I resolved to put everything to one side, and gladly profit by this short space of time which is left over to me from the occupations I mentioned, to pay, in this letter, my humble respects to Your Lordship and to tell you that the Lord Marquis our Father went away 9 days ago to Lisbon and we are here in Madrid with our Lady Mother, who, as Your Lordship must have heard, was forced by the illness of our Lord Father to stay in Saragossa, and give up attendance on Her Cæsarean Majesty (the Empress), who is now in Lisbon, and has seen the King's Catholic Majesty, her brother. Madrid, May 28, 1582.¹

¹ *Ha visto alla Maesta Cattolica del Re suo fratello* contains a Spanishism, *alla* for *la* and must be translated as above.

Another fragment of a letter to the same exists :

. . . As your Lordship has condescended so far on our behalf : I offer Your Most Excellent Lordship my homage and wish to remain ever in your service and rejoice in your favour ; and so too my Lord Father. Herewith I kiss your hands : Madrid, June 25, 1582.

Indeed, another letter is quoted by Iozzi, but it is thought to be unauthentic, on the grounds that Aloysius mentions his not having written to Orazio, in the previously quoted letter, save after a 'great and unmeasured delay.' But that letter is dated May 28th : the alleged forgery, May 18th. Between May 18th and 28th is no long time. This argument taken by itself seems inadequate. First, Aloysius may have mis-dated his letters as he did more than once. Again, his father may have made him write a dictated letter, written as from Don Ferrante, which both Aloysius and his father may have regarded as an insufficient mark of Aloysius's own respect towards an uncle with whom they wanted to remain on good terms, especially as Aloysius was his heir-apparent. Finally, the letter written below was little more than a polite receipt, while the fragment quoted above shows that Ferrante had already received a favour from Orazio, which is the more likely as always, but especially in Spain, Ferrante was in difficulties owing to his habit of gambling. The incriminated letter goes as follows :

To the Marquis Orazio Gonzaga his uncle,

Most Illustrious Lord Uncle : Though the protection and favour that Your Lordship has deigned to extend, until now, to the Lord Marquis our Father and to us all is far greater than any services we could render you, though our good will and fidelity be ever great, I thank you for all and at the behest and in the name of my Lord Father who is to-day prevented by his usual illness of the gout and could not write to you to thank you for the favour you have done him in sending him the sum he has received : directly he is back, he will regard it as his duty to repay it, with which,

respectfully kissing your hands and in the name of my father I will end : Madrile, May 18, 1582. Your Most Illustrious Lordship's Nephew and Servant, Aluigi Gonzaga.

However, even though this letter were genuine, its value is negligible compared to that which Aloysius certainly wrote in August, 1583, to his kinsman Fabio Gonzaga.

To my Most Excellent and Honoured Lord,

My Lord Father being gravely ill with gout in the hands, to such an extent that it hinders him from writing, at his order and by his charge I write myself to recommend to you the affair you know of with the gentlemen responsible for the ' Mount ' (i.e., the official usurers) of Mantua who continually molest my Lord Father and desire at all costs to be paid, threatening him even with the confiscation of his goods which would be a grave loss and ruin of our house and a scandal : seeing that the heavy expenses that have hold on him here at Court do not make it convenient for him to be able to satisfy at once and *quamprimum* his creditors : I beg that Your Lordship would intervene, kissing whose hands I finish : from Madrile, the 16th day of August, 1583. Your Lordship's most humble and devoted servant, Aluigi Gonzaga.

The letter is not only interesting because it proves how far more serious was the state of the Marquis's finances than has ever been suspected, but also, how trusted by his father the boy undoubtedly was—the statements that Ferrante used him in matters of business are not to be discounted at all. Finally, it will be seen, in a moment, that the letter was written the very day after Aloysius had been to Communion and had received, while praying before a picture of Our Lady, the conviction that he was to enter the Society of Jesus. The spiritual illumination had not interfered with his full objectivity of outlook.

The above letter has not hitherto, unless I err, been printed. It was acquired by the late Hartwell de la Garde Grissell and bequeathed with other relics to St. Aloysius's

V no 10
Lcc. Sig. mio orthy

Quando il Sig. Tho. Pether, gentilmente informato per me
de. Joh. a la mane. oratorio che gli espone di serire
re: di suo ordine al suo incarico seruire in la rue
comandando il noto affare con signori curatori.
del monte di monten chi volentieri di combino

il sig. mto padre se vogliono ad ogni altro durer per
gest. minacciano che ora il continuando di bene
il che sarebbe. Esser danno & uind de la nra casa
& scandalo: giacche lo mto mto mto mto mto mto

quoniam et sig. crederi: septio che interpres
la s. v. cui parandogli lo meno finio: di audile
adi 16 Ago. 1583

Adm. V. S.

Questa lettera è scritta
da Luigi Gonzaga,
come ho provato nella
mia degli 8 giu. 1886.

Originali Amelini
Populatore H. H.

Am. & Leu. v. S. v. S.
Luigi Gonzaga

Church in Oxford. Not only it was recognized by Fr. Torquato Armellini, postulator of the Society of Jesus, on June 8th, 1896, as in Aloysius's hand, but the late Mr. F. Madan, sub-librarian of the Bodleian Library and lecturer in mediæval palæography in the University of Oxford, after comparing it with the facsimile of the manuscript of Aloysius's oration to Philip II, quoted below, acknowledged its authenticity, though the oration is in calligraphic hand.

The original reads: *Ecc.mo Sig.r mio oss.mo. Essendo il sig.r ntro Padre gravemente infermato per male di gota a le mano etiamdio che glimpedise di scrivere: di suo ordine & suo incarico scrivo io per raccomandargli il noto affare coi signori curatori del monte di Mantua che molestano di continuo il sig.r ntro padre & uogliono ad ogni costo esser pagati minacciandole etiam il confiscamento de beni il che sarebbe graue danno & ruina de la ntra casa & scandalo: giache le molte spese che il tengono qui in corte non li da comodo di poter satisfar subito & quamprimum li sigri creditori: suplico che s'interponga la s.v. cui baciandogli le mano finisco: di Madrile a di 16 Ag.o 1583. Della V.S. Hm.mo & deuotis.o servitor Aloigi Gonzaga.* On the reverse is written: *Al Ecc.mo Sig.r Oss.mo ms.r Fabio Gonzaga racomandata al sig.r Cauriani. Mantua.* The seal is the Gonzaga coat, with Aloysius's name just visible. Aloysius and Rodolfo also had a combined seal, that both could use. Sgr. C. Foligno, Serena professor of Italian in the University of Oxford, tells me that the many mistakes in spelling and syntax are such as are to be found in great numbers in letters from artists or statesmen of this period.

The only incident that lies outside those connected with the spiritual development of Aloysius is, that he used to go, with the rest, to the bull-fights and wild-beast shows that were not only popular in Spain but, odd as it may seem to us, definitely encouraged as promoting valour and—horse-breeding. Bull-rings were not yet the rule: Aloysius was watching one such show from the balcony of a house in the square where the contests happened. A tiger, of all things,

maddened by the noise and the pain, leapt the barriers and dashed into the house. Happily, the poor beast took refuge in a cellar : the doors were slammed to, and it was recaptured. What Aloysius thought of this, who knows? Already at Milan, whither his father took him from Casale Monferrato to see a cavalry review, Aloysius had sat without letting himself look at what would once have fascinated him. In Madrid, he hardly knew the names of the streets, since he did not look about, and after all it was his footman who had the business of finding out the way. He even said, later on, that he did not know the Empress by sight, though he had crossed the sea in the same fleet at least with her, and paid those daily visits to her palace when first they reached Madrid. He was, in fact, redoubling his guard over his eyes, as he found that Madrid life was weakening his determination to serve God fervently. A book by Fr. Luis de Granada re-invigorated him, and it was now he began his fierce effort to obtain complete concentration, at least for one whole hour, and, obstinately, went back when he found himself disturbed to the beginning of his self-allotted hour of prayer.¹

It may be worth adding a few lines about Aloysius's habit of keeping his eyes down, especially with women. It is certain that he 'mortified' himself by not looking at what he might enjoy, like the cavalry review, or what might strengthen in him that vast illusion of the 'world' from which he was heroically trying to extricate himself. I have also said that a young prince had to expect deliberate attacks from ladies who would like to marry him, or who would be flattered by an alliance far short of marriage, and that this sort of thing began at ages that to our northern dispositions seem incredibly low. Experience of quite modern southerners, however, shows that as a matter of fact they are not really low. I think that Aloysius—even apart from the definite view, then prevalent, that it was very bad manners to stare

¹ Notice that even this prayer-book, assuming (as we should) it was Luis's 'grandchild' as he called it, as being drawn from his other works, was a 'Compendium' of *doctrine* : the meditations and prayers were on a strong intellectual basis.

at people, or even to raise the eyes to the face of important personages—was quite capable, in his boyhood, of taking sweeping decisions, such as never to look at a woman at all. Indeed, in the Life of his namesake, Prince Louis of France, Bishop of Toulouse, this decision is mentioned as having been taken by that young man. It would be no less like Aloysius to take a resolution, quite roundly, to imitate the French Prince Louis. Moreover, with his very logical mind, willing to apply any principle to its ultimate consequences, I dare say that he kept his resolution in the presence of his mother too. However, he never makes any allusion to this himself, and there is not a shred of contemporary evidence for it—indeed, a painting at Castiglione itself, showing him asking his mother of alms for the poor of the place, shows him too with his eyes fixed upon hers: had this shocked a local tradition, it could not have been painted. I imagine that enthusiastic servants, being examined by Cepari long afterwards, exclaimed: ‘He never looked at women, not even his mother.’ ‘What the servant said’ has always to be examined with great caution, especially when such people are excited and feel important as being examined by learned visitors, obviously anxious to find out all that might help towards the canonization of a young master, dead a decade since. My personal conviction is this: Aloysius had already started to develop his habit of extreme concentration, and of keeping before his mind, and even (dangerous strain indeed) his imagination, some thought that he considered worth entertaining. He achieved an astounding control over his mental processes in this way, and ended by being able to think of what he chose and for so long as he chose. Anyone knows how, in a boy especially, this involves not only keeping the eyes controlled—in the concrete, cast down—but probably tends to make the head bend forward, which Aloysius’s head certainly did, so much so that they had to stiffen his collar, in the noviciate, to help him to hold it in the ordinary way. Therefore I think that Aloysius never looked at anything very much, and did not require to make special resolutions

on the matter. It had become a second nature with him. I also think that he said rough things, such as that he did not know the Empress by sight, when people were snobbishly (as we should say) catechising him about his grand acquaintances, or chaffing him about his hanging head. The only two things that are absurd and false to his whole nature and to the evidence would be that he did not love his mother, and, that he was a prude. As I have said, his mother was the predominant human influence in his life ; with her he spoke, to her he wrote, with unexampled freedom, and with her spent hours in talk, and in her name—‘ just because she is our mother, and such a mother ’—he appealed to Rodolfo to behave himself. As for prudery, I may say that not a soul in that society had the least chance of being a prude, even if he or she wanted to. Moreover, that is a Protestant vice, and began later. Finally, incidents remain to be told which shall show how very far from nervous in this matter Aloysius was.

The tiny anecdotes that survive from this period show Aloysius, in part, very much as he had always been. In the tumultuous palaces, he was reduced to seeking such places for his prayers as might be quiet, especially if he had found out that servants were in the habit of peeping at him through those mysterious ‘ chinks in the doors ’ which are so often mentioned in these ‘ lives.’ After all, the art of carpentry was as perfect then as now, and what chinks these could be, is not easily understood. Anyhow, as at Monferrato Aloysius had been accustomed to escape to a room which was only used for servants to wash their hair in, an event whose occurrence he could easily, I suppose, foresee, so here at Madrid he discovered a wood-shed where he would be undisturbed, even when they were hunting for him to make him take those dancing and fencing lessons that his father had arranged for. When Ferrante arrived the Gonzagas took up their abode in a house belonging to the Genoese ambassador in the higher part of the city.¹ Aloysius was thereupon made a Knight of

¹ In 1602 it became the Jesuit Noviciate, and was demolished in mid-nineteenth century.

the Order of St. James, as his father and some of his kinsfolk had been. A fanciful statue of him wearing the immense tasselled mantle exists at Velès. The vigil and investiture cannot but have appealed to his ardent and crusading spirit.

But I would like to insist on the very serious study that Aloysius was being caused to attend to. Not only he perfected his Spanish¹ but his Latin became, if conventional, yet clear and sound. Philip came back to Madrid on March 29th, 1583, and Aloysius was chosen to read him the address of welcome, as Campion was made the panegyrist of Elizabeth. Aloysius quotes his favourite Valerius Maximus, and recalls that Demosthenes was overwhelmed in the presence of another Philip, the king of Macedon: that Cicero grew pale at the trial of Milo: no wonder, then, that Aloysius, 'in the presence of Your Majesty before whom the whole world bows,' to whom he was indebted for so many favours to his family, should be blinded by the splendour of his deeds and find no words. Compared to the grotesque flatteries of the time, the speech is not fulsome; and it is true that the Saint insists on the justice of Philip's various wars and the necessity of suppressing such insurrections as his reign experienced.

But the studies to which his very objective mind turned naturally seem to have been connected rather with mathematics, chronography, astronomy and the 'use of the globes,' as they said. Dimas, the king's own mathematician, taught him these. I take it that an immense advance had been given to the former sciences by the reform of the calendar in 1582; whereas it was natural that the King should wish Aloysius to have a thorough understanding of the Spanish Empire, especially of its relatively new parts in the Indies East and West. This had a real importance, as I shall say in a moment. But even in 'philosophy' he began to show proficiency. Naturally too he turned to that part of philosophy that enabled him to keep his mind on God, His nature and His attributes—theodicy, as we might call it now. In fact, on a

¹ He was given a scurrilous novel to improve his Spanish. His indignation flamed: he threw it in the fire.

visit to Alcalà, he was invited to take part in a debate which was going forward. He chose to argue that the mystery of the Holy Trinity could be known from human intelligence alone. While on the one hand too great importance must not be attached to the applause given to a young prince's performance on such an occasion, on the other it is certain that he would not have been allowed to make a fool of himself, nor would the University, despite its king-worship, have consented to waste its time on so terrific an occasion as such public discussions were, especially as the very important professor Fr. Gabriel Vasquez, S.J., was presiding. Alcalà took itself very seriously indeed. To Spaniards, it was the eighth wonder of the world. Not only did men, we read, ruin their healths over their studies, but they more than once preferred death to defeat. Without appealing to those cases of neurotic suicide that have occurred even in our cooler University-circles, anyone who has seen the black despair that can settle down on a Latin *intellectual* after some scholastic defeat, and his conviction that life is now no more worth living, will be quite ready to believe that La Cerda, who tells us this, does not exaggerate. Alcalà carries us right back into the Middle Ages, when intellectual passions, in such groups, ran far fiercer even than the physical ones, and the Middle Ages are even now not dead.

But you will have seen that by now Aloysius's mind had in any case trembled towards the conviction that a prince's life was for him impossible: little was needed—one more Court, like this one—to make him decide that the variations between good and bad court careers were so insignificant that it was idle to expect him to attend to them. But here in Spain, not only a definite maturing is visible in him, but, the studies that he was going through kept enlarging his horizons, and with each new land that he heard of, came an invigoration of his view that such lands were not just new places from which to extract more gold, but places to which one should desire to give Christ's Faith. His confessor, Fr. Ferdinand Paterno, rector of the Jesuit College of Madrid,

opened in 1572, was of great help to him, though the question of vocation was not actually discussed between them. The confessor observed in Aloysius at this time three things especially: first, his remarkable maturity of judgment; second, his detestation of idleness—one of his favourite occupations being, indeed, the study of the Scriptures; and third, his great care, when talking, never to say a word against anybody. These are fine qualities, and that the confessor should have noted and remembered them, proves too that he was himself on the look-out for what was worth seeing.

The maturing of Aloysius's mind shows itself in the very steps by which he moved to deciding what he ought to do with himself. He had seen, by now, that there was only one King uncriticizable—one Kingdom only to which a man could give the whole of his heart and of his service, and that these are Christ, and that Kingdom which He wishes us to build, along with Him, upon this earth, till it reaches its consummation in the heavens. Having seen this, all this world and its marvels sank for him into the dimensions of a caricature. He knew that it was out of the question even to ask him to dedicate himself to what he had seemed born for. At first, in sheer reaction, he had thought of the Capuchins, as austere, and obviously 'un-worldly.' He mentioned this to his mother, who was appalled and said his health would never stand it. Aloysius agreed: he foresaw that he would have to ask for exemptions, and that this was a source of weakness in a community he quite well realized. Like St. Ignatius, his young crusader's fancy thereupon turned to some Order that should be, actually, degenerate, that he might reform it. He soon saw through this dangerous and heady illusion. He proceeded to think over the contemplative Orders, that celebrated with great pomp the Liturgy and spent long in meditation. Thereupon, this young recluse, as you may have thought him, this lad who seemed to sacrifice everything for prayers, perceived that he had other qualities which implied he was to do work among his fellows and not merely for them. The present Holy Father has said that Aloysius was quite

aware of his own gifts, and has recalled how Aloysius somewhere wrote: 'Take care! your superior may easily be worth *less than you are.*' All the more, Obedience must be to *God.* He looked then for an Order where he could use them, fortifying himself with the reflection that St. Thomas teaches that the most perfect life is that which imitates more closely than any other does, that led by Our Lord Himself upon earth.

He had therefore moved slowly to the decision that he must join a religious order, and one, definitely, which combined the prayer proper to all such congregations with the active, exterior work that far fewer, then, devoted themselves to than to-day. He had begun by a fear and disgust for the life led by his world: he desired to live otherwise. He then seemed to see that to live on quite different principles from those of that world, while remaining in that world, would be impossible. He could not be a hermit in his palace. The notion of the religious life then dawned, and a withdrawal into that strange world that existed parallel to, in juxtaposition with, the world of court and camp. This seems to have dominated his mind far more than the priesthood as such ever did. He knew, instinctively at first, and then by sheer observation, that it would be no use becoming just a priest. In those tragic times, tragic for Church as well as world, a member of a family such as his, who became a priest, almost at once found himself thrust into positions such as Cardinal, Archbishop, Patriarch, at ages when they were still almost children, nay, before they were so much as ordained, that their titles might add lustre to their family, or suit those that were already theirs, and, what was still more to the point, that the vast revenues proper then to such positions—so different was ecclesiastical life in those days from that of our times—might flow into their hands. But the vast wealth required by these great princes was got, and could only be got, by the most savage taxation. Whole districts of Europe were worse devastated by taxes than by war. If the plague made its victims with such ease, it was because the mass of European population was half-starved. Aloysius, with his

mind that could so ruthlessly see white, and could see black, but had no vision for grey compromises, had long since decided that if his wealth could only be acquired from these tainted sources, he would have none at all. Moreover, Christ, whom he now wished to serve as King, had had none, and that sufficed for argument. It did but remain to make it impossible for himself to re-acquire that wealth through a new channel.

In proportion, then, as he learned to know the Society of Jesus better, he saw that there was what he wanted. It was a young Society and still, as he now much more wisely reflected, in its first fervour, so that he would be dragged down by no weight of convention, softened by no relaxing atmosphere. It devoted itself largely to education, and Aloysius had found from experience that he got on well with young men. It is well worth insisting upon this. For when you read, in any biography, some sentence spoken by its subject, what you do *not* read is, the tone of voice, the manner, in which it was spoken. It is certain that Aloysius could, when he wanted to, deal out the most appalling snubs. But it will be seen that he reserved these for the 'great' who were trying to seduce him from his ideal. His great charm of manner is often mentioned: he could be as gentle and even as cheerful as anyone could wish. When the prince of Asturias, a petulant boy, kept shouting at the wind, one day, to stop blowing, Aloysius said to him that he might well be Prince and heir to all the Spains, but all the same no one could manage the wind save God. It is insisted that he said this genially: but into what a pompous and priggish sentiment it can be distorted! Moreover, the remark became famous, not because of its originality or piety, but because it was said to the Heir to the Throne. That is why it was reported to Philip, who laughed and was pleased. Quite likely not a soul save Aloysius would have dared, in that court, to do anything but flatter Don Diego. Who does not know what a revelation it is to see a play acted, that you have only read? To understand Aloysius, you have to catch the whole tone, as it were, of his life. It remains that Aloysius got on well with people, from

courtiers to coachmen. Also, the Society was enthusiastically working in those mission-fields, whose gorgeous vision flamed always on his horizon. Finally, the Society added to its vow of personal poverty, that vow of not receiving ecclesiastical honours, which at one blow cut off, not only wealth, but the possibility of obtaining it. Having thought all this very carefully out, it merely remained to make sure whether God willed that he should act upon what he seemed to see. And he obtained that assurance.

On the feast of the Assumption, August 15th, 1583, he went to Communion at the Jesuit church, and knelt during his thanksgiving before a picture of Our Blessed Lady.¹ As he knelt, he heard in his heart that voice, which comes to those who listen, giving him the absolute certainty that he needed. He left the church without the possibility of doubt existing in him, and from then on, whatever happened, he knew that there were no more two paths for his footsteps. He went that day to his confessor, Fr. Paterno, and told him his decision. The priest concluded that there was here a true vocation, but added that there could be no question of any further steps till the permission of Don Ferrante had been obtained. And for once—Aloysius flinched.

He went straight home to his mother, and asked her to see how Don Ferrante would take it. Ferrante took it like a volcano in eruption; and the next months are simply a battle royal between Aloysius and his father. Ferrante sent for the young man, and, in a tornado of rage, told him to drop the subject, or he would have him stripped and flogged. He sent for Donna Marta, and told the poor lady that this was a plot of hers, to filch the succession for her 'favourite' Rodolfo. Her 'favourite'! This poor mother loved all her sons, and perhaps mothers love those especially who give them most grief. She did not, true, foresee what a young

¹ This ancient picture came from Italy to Spain and was in the Church of the Imperial College at Madrid. In consequence of Aloysius's vocation it became called 'Our Lady of Good Counsel.' It is not, of course, the famous one of Gennazano.

Caligula (as he has been called) Rodolfo would grow up, wishing but that his subjects had one neck only, that he might decapitate them at one blow : still less, in how few years he would die, a murderer, murdered, and excommunicate, nor be so much as buried in consecrated soil. But that she should try to oust her 'angel' for Rodolfo ! Certainly Ferrante was, for the moment, mad. He sent then for the confessor. Paterno came, and Ferrante attacked him as the cause of all this trouble, and for wishing to kidnap Aloysius for his Order. The confessor answered quietly that he had known nothing of Aloysius's intention—however much he might have guessed that his mind was moving in that line—till the day before, and that he had never mentioned the subject till Aloysius himself did so. Ferrante, somewhat abashed, let Paterno go. But in his solitude the rage of his mind boiled up anew. He ran about the Court, uttering loud cries concerning his son's iniquity. The Court laughed. ' You have,' said they, ' a son shrewder than you guess.' Money was what hypnotised the Spaniard. Ferrante, they knew, was mad on gambling. In Madrid he had lost thousands upon thousands. Only the other day, he had lost six thousand gold pieces more. That very day (August 16th) Aloysius had in fact written to Don Fabio about Ferrante's creditors. Aloysius, the cynics were convinced, had no intention of inheriting a ruined principality and had thought out a piece of pious blackmail. He would hold his vocation over his father's head—' If you behave like this, I go off altogether. If you give up your gambling, I speak no more of vocation.' Ferrante was actually convinced that this was so. Philip himself, we read, interviewed Aloysius : his views on the matter are not known : perhaps the tired and disheartened king, destined so soon to grow sadder still, more morose, more self-isolated, saw in the young man something that he took to resemble his own disgust with things, and half-envied him the possibility of abdicating. The person who convinced Ferrante that his son meant what he said, was Hannibal Gonzaga, son of Charles Gonzaga, Prince of Bozzoli, and brother of the Scipio Gonzaga

who was soon to be made Cardinal. He had been a courtier in Spain, but after his return from Flanders in 1562 entered the Franciscan Order and took the name of Francis. Soon enough he became General, and was now visiting the houses of his Order in Spain. Ferrante was convinced by his cousin's arguments and still more example, that Aloysius really was sincere in what he said, and the fact that Francis Gonzaga, as he now was, had become the General, took the edge off the situation. For the worst feature of all was, that among the Jesuits Aloysius would be shut off from dignities, even if he became their General, as everyone afterwards was sure he would.¹

Suddenly a crash came. Don Diego died of smallpox. Aloysius conceived the notion that he had now no more duties at court. He went for a walk with Rodolfo, and turned in at the Jesuit College. There he sat down, and refused, point-blank, to budge. He told Rodolfo and the small army of attendants they went about with, that they could go home. As for himself, there he was, and there he proposed to stay. The servants, aghast, went trembling back to Ferrante. Aloysius remained immovable among hosts hardly less embarrassed than the servants. He had chosen, moreover, a moment when his father was in bed with gout. The desperate Ferrante therefore sent a Castiglione magistrate, Dr. Sallustio Petrocini, to bring Aloysius home at once. Aloysius sent back word that what had got to be done to-morrow might just as well be done to-day. His unhappy father retorted that nothing would induce him to allow his son to make him look a fool in the eyes of all men ; if go he must, let him at least go from his own house, and in a way that should be tolerably dignified. At this, Aloysius got up and returned home.

But the Marquis was discovering that the stay in Spain

¹ It is worth remembering that furious as was St. Stanislaus's father because he had run away to Rome and meant to join the same Society, what appears to have made him quite insane with rage was that the boy had disgraced the whole clan of the Kostkas by wandering about Austria in beggar's clothes. The Roman Jesuits found this notion 'rather vulgar'!

was turning out quite differently from anything he had intended. He announced frankly that he was not going to have his family made to look silly in the eyes of the entire kingdom, by his eldest son going off and making some sort of a monk of himself. They would all go back to Italy, and there Aloysius should do as he pleased. He sent therefore once more for the Franciscan, and begged first that he should persuade Aloysius to remain in the world and succeed him in Castiglione. After all, there were plenty of Cardinals who ruled States. The Franciscan said it was really too much to ask him to persuade a young man not to become a religious when the retort would be so easy. Ferrante then begged him to add his weight to the decision to return first to Italy, and let any further steps be taken there. Francis Gonzaga declined to do even this; for precisely the same suggestion had been made to him when at this same court he had decided to enter religion. He had resisted his relatives on this point, and had entered the Franciscans forthwith. At most he consented to lay the plan before Aloysius, without arguing on this side or on that. Aloysius, who had as a principle to yield in all that did not compromise his other principles, consented. This combination of absolute inflexibility, and his habit too of suddenly making some extremely disconcerting manifesto, as it were, of his intentions, with a readiness to oblige when obliging did not compromise the main issue, is a better mark of strength than mere all-round obstinacy would be. There are to be other and rather startling instances of this. The upshot was, that in the spring of 1584, they embarked on Admiral Doria's fleet once more and sailed for home.¹

In Spain, therefore, the situation had abruptly crystallized, Aloysius's mind had definitely taken shape, he was sure of his motives, sure too of his objective, and nothing now remained except to decide upon the method. I think that the

¹ Donna Marta's youngest son, Diego, was born in 1582, while they were in Spain. His sister Isabella died there in 1583. Litta and others mention two more daughters of Ferrante's, Louisa and Angela. No official record of them exists. There is a mistake; or, they were illegitimate.

attitude of Don Ferrante has to be appreciated with care and sympathy. Ferrante was not only not a bad man, but a sincerely religious and even devout man. From what I have said, it should be clear that such qualities could then co-exist, and perhaps they still can, with astounding aberrations from the right behaviour. So far as there is any evidence, Ferrante's faults were, a passion for gambling, a vaulting ambition, and an explosive temper. 'La Gonzaghina' was a proverbial phenomenon. It apparently meant a prolonged and rather grim nursing of discontent, followed by a sudden explosion that shook the house. I take it that he had no great opinion of his second son; Francis was colourless, and anyhow still quite young. The others were mere boys—and of them, Diego was to be murdered; Cristierno and Vincenzo turned out worse than any of them. Anyhow, his entire hope, and it was an immense, unlimited hope, was centred in Aloysius. And rightly. We cannot disguise from ourselves that Aloysius was an amazing young man. He had a constitution of iron: he was extremely vivacious; he was not only brilliantly clever but had a hardness of intelligence that does not always go with cleverness. The great personages of those days were not fools: they knew what to look for: not a soul, for example, expected from Vincent, the heir to the Mantua dukedom, what was expected from Aloysius. Ferrante quite easily gave up his hopes that Aloysius would make a great soldier, when it became so obvious that he had it in him to make a great statesman. Ferrante certainly wanted a man to succeed him who should be able properly to govern even that accumulation of estates and cities that would belong to his son after the death not only of himself, but of Don Orazio and of Don Alfonso. But he looked much further, and foresaw in Aloysius presumably the first of the Gonzagas anywhere. Again and again he says that all his hopes are concentrated in the one Aloysius. Whereupon the young man blows the whole towering edifice to pieces. Not only he proposes to live celibate, but he announces that no title of any sort shall henceforward be his. You can imagine the blank incredulity of the Marquis

when first he heard of this ; his uproarious derision when the idea was urged ; his fury when it was forced upon him that Aloysius really meant it : his tears of defeated rage, his almost comic despair—were the thing not right outside the limits of comedy—when he found himself confronting a cliff-face of adamant, and that argument, threat, tears, alike were to avail nothing. The final renunciation made by Ferrante is one which will win from us our intensest sympathy and our very high respect. One thing, in fact, and one only, will justify Aloysius—that his vocation was indeed divine.

NOTE—Since the above was printed, we find that the tradition that Aloysius stayed at Vicenza and Verona, on his way to Spain, hitherto unsubstantiated by documents at either place, has lately been proved right, at least as regards Vicenza. A deposition of Fr. L. Valmarana made in Aug. 1609 proves that his father was proud to recall that when the Empress came through Vicenza she stayed at the Valmarana palace, where Aloysius also was, and Count Leonard Valmarana had shared Aloysius's bed for some nights, owing to the overcrowding of the palace. The details of the Empress's entry into Vicenza have also been published. She only stayed one night there : so we conclude that the Gonzagas got there somewhat ahead of her. Later on, Fr. Luigi Valmarana served Aloysius, who sat alone, in the refectory of the Jesuit house at Brescia.

CHAPTER VI

TEMPESTUOUS DAWN

*He kept his word:
He kept his word as none but he
Could keep it, and as did not we.
And round him, as he kept his word,
The day's diseased and faithless herd,
A moment loud, a moment strong,
But foul for ever, rolled along.*

H. Belloc.

THE homeward journey therefore began. Aloysius found a small pebble, marked with red. To him it suggested the five wounds of the Crucifixion. 'Look,' he said to his mother, 'what God has made me find! And yet my father does not wish to give me leave to enter religion.' It is hard to feel certain what value this argument had for Aloysius. Did he say it with a half-smile? would he have used it to Ferrante? I doubt it. Yet it is certain that the most objective minds can be impressed by tiny happenings, and Aloysius carried his pebble about with him for a long time.

Another incident is symptomatic. On the way to Barcelona, they halted at the house of Don Diego Jeronimo de Espés y Mendoza at Saragossa. The cavalcade arrived very much at the wrong moment. Don Diego's wife was unable to give birth to a child, and was in extreme danger. The doctors had in fact resolved to kill the child that its mother might be saved. Aloysius knew the story of his own birth. Moreover, no one made any attempt to disguise the situation from him. The astounding lad held the whole place up—Don Diego, his doctors, the household at large, and surely his own party, which must have felt that it really could not interfere. Aloysius asked for a moment's delay. He went to the castle chapel, prayed, and the lady was safely delivered. Miracle

or happy chance, matters little. It is the sweeping personality of the passing guest that would suffice to amaze anyone.

The fleet therefore sailed, Father Francis Gonzaga joining it at the last minute. As it was crossing the Gulf of Lyons, lo, corsairs on the horizon ! They were Algerian Turks, under the Bey Asan Agar, and they followed the Christian ships into the very gulf of Genoa. ' Perhaps we shall all be martyred ! ' had been the young prince's cry : he hoped, you may feel, to solve, and better than solve, all his difficulties literally at one blow.

On July 28th they reached Genoa, and went straight to Castiglione. Aloysius had been told that in Italy he should please himself. But not at all. Ferrante sent him, with Rodolfo, off on a sort of grand tour of official good-byes, hoping that the flattery and luxury he would experience might divert him from his purpose. Aloysius set his teeth : he went, but he went as a man engaged, who might permit to himself no least trifling with his troth. Clothes of extreme richness had been prepared for the young men : Aloysius refused to wear them, stuck to his black serge, and handed the clothes over to Rodolfo. He was not slow to enjoy them, though he always displayed the due exterior homage to his brother the heir, and walked a step behind him. When they were at Parma, they visited the Jesuit noviciate of Novellara, accompanied by a large retinue, and were magnificently welcomed by the local potentates, who were also Gonzagas. The novices noticed that Rodolfo was rather taller than Aloysius¹ and more richly dressed, but always yielded the first place. The novices were all drawn up in a line to pay them homage, and were so struck by Aloysius that the narrator ' hardly dared look at

¹ Of Aloysius we know that he was tolerably tall, dark, with an aquiline nose like Borromeo's, with large black eyes, and that even his austerities with his consequent emaciation and pallor, could not disguise the great strength of his physique. His portraits conspire to show his almost rectangular jaw-bone, though as an article by Porcella in *S. Luigi*, pp. 151-155, proves, none of them can be regarded as authentic, save, he argues, one by El Greco (who must have known him in Madrid : it was in the Nemes collection at Budapest and is now in that of Sankt Aupsitz at Vienna)

him.' The rumour, already current, that Aloysius wished to enter the Society, but could not find a way, went far to establish them in their own vocation.

The brothers went first to Mantua, and thence to Ferrara. Alfonso d' Este was reigning there : his wife was Margaret, a Gonzaga of Mantua. Thence to Parma : Ranuccio II was prince there, son of Alexander Farnese, General of Philip II of Spain and Governor of the Netherlands. Thence to Pavia, where to his relief Aloysius met Frederick Borromeo, who was to succeed his uncle in the see of Milan. Strange encounter, between a Saint and one who was to do so much, and so successfully, to win him beatification. And thence to Turin, where Charles Emanuel, Duke of Savoy and Piedmont, had fixed his capital. He had married Catherine, Infanta of Spain, and the youngest daughter of Philip II : their solemn entry into Turin took place on August 10th, 1585. Even here, they could not persuade Aloysius to dress ' properly.'

When he arrived at these courts, he would first of all pay his respects to their sovereigns, and then go so soon as possible to the local Jesuit college, and, in it, first of all to visit the Blessed Sacrament in its chapel. At Turin, he stayed for part of the time at any rate with the Archbishop. It was here that an old nobleman sought, in his hearing, that flattery which elderly folks beg from the young by means of indecent jokes. Aloysius, who on such occasions could make the most of his rank, dealt him the terrific snub that silenced him. Even at Chieri, whither he had gone to visit his uncle Hercules Tana, he consented with much reluctance to go to the state banquet that Hercules gave in his honour : he realized that not to go would cause embarrassment to many persons : but he promised that he would on no account dance after the dinner. He made his entry into the ballroom, which was thronged, and almost at once a lady came up (startling inversion of the rôles !) and begged him to dance with her. He rose, bowed, and left. The unhappy Hercules followed in pursuit, and at last ran him to earth in a servant's room, where Aloysius was on his knees between the bed and the wall, and such was the awe

his ecstasy inspired that his uncle, overwhelmed, left him to his prayers.

It has to be incessantly remembered that there are different ways of acquiring Sanctity, and, of expressing it. Another young man, in different circumstances, would probably have concealed at all points his inner, spiritual life, and have been right in doing so, save when declaration was directly demanded: another would have danced, precisely because he did not like dancing, but wished to give pleasure; or again, because though he loved it, and knew that the time was drawing near when he must abandon it, he yet knew himself strong enough to permit himself to enjoy it without being for one moment carried away by it. Aloysius, by temperament, I think, and by true inspiration, and possibly by choices that here and there were logical but as yet less wise, could do nothing of the sort. The years that follow will be harsh ones. He is deliberately setting himself cross-ways to the society of his times. He is flinging his glove full in its face. He is trying desperately to persuade that world that he has promised himself to a life that is built up upon principles quite different from its own. He is almost truculently determined to placard before all eyes that he does not want what is being thrust on him, and hopes to leave it wholly so soon as he may, and so far as he may, immediately. Did he feel more than this, as a recent writer suggests? ¹ 'Among the ancient dynastic families,' he writes, 'the Gonzagas, grown up and grown strong on battle-fields, went sadly notorious for unheard-of excesses of lust and cruelty.' On another page we read of how a not distant ancestor of Aloysius's, Francis Gonzaga, had written, appalled by the Sack of Rome, May 5th, 1527, at which he assisted, that not Vandals, Goths, nor Turks together could have accumulated so many horrors. But the modern writer sees in this God's punishment for an epoch of indescribable disorders, 'during which not only among the orgies of princely courts and the cynicism of the theories of Il Principe and the

licentious irony of the Ariostan poetry, but also amid "our own" disgraces, and altars smothered in filth, a joyous and obscene carnival had entrenched itself.' And if that was a generation since, from what I shall allude to in connection with Mantua under the next Duke, Vincent, soon to reign, you can understand the meaning of his chronicler when he writes that 'the age was chaotic and corrupt by the fault of all—impudence and impurity were triumphant . . . the huge wave of lascivious comments [on a particular Gonzagan scandal] swept through the very convents, and in Mantua itself, the holy altars served for a mockery of love—the place had become Sybaris and Cyprus in one.' 'Aloysius,' the Jesuit author holds, 'was a victim for that world: after the period of tremendous ruins and enormous crimes . . . the arduous and holy period of reconstruction and of expiation.'

That Aloysius explicitly thought of himself as a 'victim,' who might 'make up in his own flesh what was lacking in the sufferings' of Our Lord, on behalf of His Body which is the Church, I do not quite believe. But that he held he should do penance on behalf of a world so fallen from that beauty of grace that Christ would see shining in it, is certain. In some of his retreat-notes, he wrote thus:

The pillars of heaven have fallen and been broken in pieces: who can promise me perseverance?

The world is now in the depths of malice. Who shall appease the anger of God Almighty?

The greater number of religious and ecclesiastics forget their vocation: How will God continue to bear so great a loss to His Kingdom?

The faithful all their lives by their negligence deprive God of His glory: who shall restore it?

Woe to seculars, who defer penance until death is near: woe too to religious who have slumbered till the last hour.

By these thoughts sluggishness is to be shaken off, and our resolution to do penance, to serve God faithfully and constantly, renewed. . . .

True repentance is awakened by deep grief for the contempt of so loving a God, who has been outraged by me.

This sorrow makes me grieve so deeply for mortal sins, that it excites great sorrow even for all venial sins.

It goes so far, that not only does it acknowledge and adore God's mercy in pardoning sins, but for the honour of the divine justice it most earnestly desires to suffer all the punishment due to our sins.

God infuses into the hearts of the well-disposed this great hatred of self by which the resolution of severely punishing ourselves by exterior penances is aroused and strengthened.

Such then is the summing-up of his world by a young man who certainly had every opportunity of knowing it; the mature balance of whose judgment is the theme of comment so continuous as to become almost wearisome: who is on the eve of proving it by carrying out business in his father's name of a responsibility that would seem excessive even for those days of youthful enterprise, and who is within seven years of effecting peace between princes whom even the Emperor could not control, and whose letters, finally, are so objective and unemotional that from them, certainly, this passionate inner life would never be suspected. No wonder St. Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi, in her ecstatic outcries concerning the Saint, dwelt especially on this interior life of his. 'He has such glory because his life was hidden. . . . Who ever could tell the worth and power of interior actions? there is no comparison between the exterior and the inner. . . . Aloysius was an unknown martyr. For whoever loves Thee, my God, knows Thee to be so great and infinitely worthy of love, that it is a great martyrdom to see that Thou art not loved, as he would wish to love Thee, and that Thou art not known by Thine own creatures—not known, nay, offended. He martyred himself, too!'

The reticent Aloysius would not have thought, still less have spoken of himself thus: none the less, the penance he inflicted on his great innocence must, without doubt, have been caught up into the great expiatory sacrifice of Christ,

and have been powerful for the men of his age, and of the period dawning. If it be said that Aloysius at least thought that he was doing penance for sins of his own, and even began the notes I have quoted with the words: 'The judgments of God are inscrutable—who knows whether He has yet pardoned my sins in the world?' you will remember that the Saints had a very clear view of what they were in themselves—not only their nothingness as compared with Him who created and was preserving them, but, of that evil that they were certain to commit, were it not for the sustaining grace of God. They felt that the only thing they had of their own to contribute, even though actually they did not so contribute it, was sin.

He returned, aged seventeen, to Castiglione, and it was there that the heavy artillery began to be trained upon him. The Duke of Mantua first sent a bishop to him, who tried to persuade him to enter the secular priesthood, on the grounds that so much good could be done there—look at Borromeo!—and besides, to secular priests, a 'career' was still open. In fact, the Duke promised him practically any ecclesiastical dignity that his influence could obtain. Aloysius thanked him, concluding his polite phrases with the curt remark that he could obtain any dignity he chose from his own branch of the family. Don Alfonso Gonzaga of Castel Goffredo, his uncle, took up the attack. He received as conclusive a reply. Another followed, who is thought to have been Cardinal Vincent Gonzaga, of the Guastalla-Molfetta branch; he tried the homœopathic remedy of advising Aloysius to join the Capuchins or the Carthusians, on the grounds of their great austerity. Aloysius knew perfectly well that members of these orders could be given exalted ranks, and said that the Society seemed quite unworldly enough for his purpose. The old Archpriest of Castiglione, Pastorio, for whom Aloysius had a real affection, argued long and lovingly with him: to him, Aloysius showed greater consideration, and explained his ideals so thoroughly that the priest was converted and now took his side. A very famous preacher, Fr. Francis

Panigarola, a Franciscan, was next imported, and did, said he, the devil's work to the very best of his ability. Aloysius remained immovable.

Ferrante, convinced by now that Aloysius must have been persuaded, sent for him. I take it that during this period he had refused altogether to discuss the matter with his son. 'What,' said he, 'do you propose to do?' 'Enter the Society of Jesus,' said Aloysius. The Gonzagan outburst, this time, was terrific. Ferrante, with scowling face and biting words, ordered the young man out of his sight. Aloysius went straight to his apartments, told his valet to pack his bed and his books, and what else he needed, and migrated to a country-house of theirs near the Franciscan convent of Santa Maria, one mile distant from the town! The villa was charming. There was an artificial lake hard by, and water was brought into subterranean vaults, rich with mosaics, and rose in a great fountain before the palazzo. His traditional room has been further adorned and made into a chapel, not least by the care of Pius X, when he was Bishop of Mantua. Here Aloysius established himself in entire independence. Days passed. Don Ferrante, in bed with gout, refused so much as to enquire what his son was doing. No one dared tell the Marquis anything. At last, curiosity mastering his sulks, Ferrante asked where Aloysius was. They told him, and the poor man, justifiably furious, sent to have him brought forthwith back. He asked him what he meant by it. Aloysius said he had understood that his father had ordered him to leave the house. Ferrante commanded him to his room. Aloysius bowed and went. Ferrante sent the Governor of Castiglione to see what his son was doing. The door was locked, and a footman was sitting outside it. 'Let me in.' 'His Lordship has given orders that no one is to be admitted,' The Governor said *he* had orders to see what Aloysius was up to. The valet was obdurate. The situation was solved by the Governor's boring a hole in the door and peering through. Aloysius had stripped, and was scourging his shoulders before a crucifix. With tears in his eyes, the Governor went

back to Don Ferrante. 'Why are you crying?' 'Sir, what I have seen would make anyone cry.' He then told the Marquis, who could hardly believe his ears. Next day at the same hour he had himself carried to the door in a sedan chair, looked through the peep-hole, and remained thunder-struck. After a while, he ordered the door to be forced open, entered, and found the floor stained with his son's blood and his tears. The shock had been great, and since thereafter Aloysius allowed no day to pass without asking his father for leave to go away, the Marquis at last gave in, and wrote to Scipio Gonzaga, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who resided in Rome, to beg him to inform Claudius Acquaviva, General of the Jesuits, that his son, 'the dearest thing I possess in this world,' wished to join the Society. And he asked where the noviciate should be made. Acquaviva, if the events have not been foreshortened, accepted Aloysius out of hand, and said that the noviciate had better be made in Rome. I quite understand that the house at Novellara, in the midst of a Gonzaga territory, would have been an awkward place for him to live in. On the other hand, Acquaviva, son of the Duke of Atri, was a connection of the Gonzagas, belonging to the line of Gonzaga-Sabionetta-Bozzoli, and this very fact may have softened the event somewhat for Ferrante. If the following letter is genuine, Aloysius, nearly off his head with surprise and delight, must have written forthwith to the General in terms that suggest he thought he could be off almost that very day: but the authenticity of the letter is impugned on grounds which do not convince me, if only because I seldom find any arguments, for or against such documents, conclusive. At any rate, Aloysius wrote three times in all to the General, and so, with this warning, I print what follows:

To the Rev. Father Claudio Acquaviva, General of the Society of Jesus: **My** Lord Father most respected in Our Lord,

Your Reverence cannot believe how great was the consolation that the Lord God willed to grant me these

last days. I have ever hoped and trusted in the infinite mercy of His Divine Majesty that after a hard and difficult fight He would make the affair of my eternal salvation turn out for the very best: and as I do not doubt that Your Reverence will finally console me, I shall be able to say with assurance: *Facta est tranquillitas magna*—there came a great calm—and at my departure from my father's house: *Et domus mea hodie salva facta est*—To-day hath salvation come unto my House. So will Your Reverence let me know quickly and as you judge best about my departure *ad sanctam civitatem*, 'to the Holy City,' where the Vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ has his throne, that I may share there in the company of holy men and profit by their holy advice for my correction and by their example with the help of God most blessed to form for myself *novum hominem*—a new man. My Lord Father will tell you everything, and I from now will begin to obey you better and to conclude kiss your hands: from Castiglione, Aug. 15, 1585: Assumption of Mary most holy. Your Rev.'s very obedient son in the Lord, Aluigi Gonzaga.

The General sent an affectionate reply, calling Aloysius his son and promising him a welcome. But what Aloysius had not recalled was, that the affair of his abdication had to be put upon a legal basis. He was, to start with, an imperial prince, and could not move hand or foot without the Emperor's permission. The deed was drawn up: Aloysius renounced Castiglione in favour of Rodolfo: he further renounced every fief that might fall to him by inheritance or bequest: but he also startlingly accepted a sum of 2,000 ducats down and a yearly pension of 200. I expect he was ready to accept anything and everything provided the thing could be put through quickly; and anyhow he was under no obligation to make use of the yearly pension. Local lawyers discussed the validity of the deed, and then the Senate of Milan did so. Finally it was sent up to the Emperor for his ratification. Aloysius anxiously implored the Duchess of Mantua, daughter of Ferdinand I and aunt of Emperor Rodolfo, to assist him

by her powerful intercession, and she promised to do so, and indeed wrote forthwith to the Emperor. Then the weeks dragged by. I should not be surprised if they were the slowest in the young man's whole life.

Yet even those weeks were broken up by journeys, Ferrante had 'business' to which he could not attend himself, being in bed with gout, at Milan. He sent Aloysius to transact it. I cannot but surmise that when the biographers allude thus cryptically to business, it refers more likely than not to loans, of which Ferrante was finding himself more and more in need. When Aloysius reaches Milan, we see, not only that no hint of any sort is given to us of what it was, but that he had plenty of time to himself, and also could attend lectures regularly and do a great deal of study. Therefore I take it he cannot have been spending tedious hours in negotiations with noblemen, and waiting in their ante-chambers. On the other hand, we read that his father 'several times' entrusted him with business with 'various princes,' and this may have been one of them. Yet even so, the matter can have been financial. Anyhow, Aloysius went to Milan by way of Pavia, where he saw again his cousin Frederick Borromeo, who was studying for the priesthood there. At Milan he had to spend seven or eight months altogether, and, with his horror of empty days, attached himself to the Brera College, —an enormous building with serene arcades and Ionic columns and calm vaults and dignified balustrades—really one of the good examples of a style which, when not exuberant and ostentatious, is admirable. It had been assigned to the Society through the intervention of Charles Borromeo, after the dissolution of the order of the Humiliati, to which at first it belonged, by Pius IV in 1564. He became therefore one of the innumerable extern students who flocked to its courses, and was by no means but an honorary one, but took his full part in all their disputes and public arguments and admitted no exceptions. The Rector and professor of philosophy was Paul Oliva, and it was philosophy that Aloysius resumed, having broken its ice in Spain: but his chief

work was 'natural science' and mathematics, and it was here that he showed best his astonishing grasp of a subject and also memory. When business prevented his attending the classes, he had the lectures written out for him by a secretary: the mathematical lectures were not dictated; he just sat back, listened, returned home, and dictated the entire lecture himself, and these manuscripts came to the hands of Cepari, who was with good reason astounded to find that Aloysius never made one mistake with regard to 'proof, figures, measures, calculations, lines, or correct terms.' His brilliancy, joined to his great simplicity, friendliness, and modesty made a profound impression in the whole city. We are not told where he lived; but he used to spend as much time as he could in the College itself, and made great friends with the lay-brothers. A touch almost of sentiment here introduces itself into this rigidly ruled life—almost of wistfulness. He used to go for walks on Thursdays, which were holiday, in the direction of a country-place called La Ghisolfia, rather more than a mile from the Porta Comasina. Hither the priests and students of the College used to go to spend the day. Aloysius started early, dismissed his lackeys when they had got beyond the town, and then used to sit down and read books beneath the trees, or *pick violets* in the spring, till he saw the Fathers coming along. Then he used to get up, salute them, and stroll along some way behind them till the road's turn hid them. Then he awaited the next group. So did he envy the men who possessed what he was seeking, and satisfy his heart by so fleeting a glimpse of the longed-for life. At other times he used to get the porter at the College to let him have the keys, and pretended he was already a Religious—with a job. . . . Frankly, this sudden sight of Aloysius pretending, let alone picking flowers, and stalking the Fathers, fills me with astonishment and delight.

Carnival came, and the city waxed riotous. Aloysius transferred himself entirely to the College for those days, save on one when he emerged, but, to me, intriguingly. Part of the celebrations was a tournament, prefaced by one of those

processions Italians love, and containing an exhibition of those feats of horsemanship for which their cavalry is even now famous, and in which they then ranked below Spain alone. Riding-schools in fact are said to have attracted as many young men to Italy, from France or Germany, as the universities did. I have said how devoted the Gonzagas were to horse-flesh, and even Aloysius had a number of horses in his stables. One of them in fact used to be led after him, magnificently caparisoned with velvet, wherever he went. It is this sort of almost grotesque contrast that is so valuable for us to visualize—the self-possessed young prince, in Florentine black serge, followed by a footman much grander than he was, carrying books, and then a horse, upholstered, poor beast, in heavy velvet embroidered with coat of arms, led by yet other grooms. On this Carnival day, however, he went out into the streets on a mule, with ‘only two servants’ as his escort. People laughed, or were ‘consoled,” according to their dispositions. What lay behind this incident? It is the reason for things that one would so much like to know. Did Aloysius really *feel* the thing as a biting humiliation? I cannot believe he did it just as a placard of what he thought of the Carnival. That he did not attend it at all, would have been sufficient indication. Or had great pressure been brought to bear on him, that he should go, and did he suddenly consent, but insist that if go he must, he would go in his own way? I think that this would have been characteristic of him: and such speculations are not quite idle, because they make one remember that Saints were real men, and what a mere network of incidents their ‘lives’ too often cannot but be, with the living element, as a matter of fact, omitted.

Meanwhile, the ratification of the act of abdication had arrived from the Emperor. Ferrante appeared, unannounced and in person, at Milan. He still hoped against hope that his son’s vocation might turn out to be what they now call a ‘phase.’ Aloysius said it was a fixity. The arguments began anew. Overwhelmingly the strongest were, that if Aloysius went, there would be no one fit to take up the succession

should Ferrante die—and even to-day, one constantly hears it said that Aloysius would have acted more justly and even more unselfishly had he remained to do his heavy and irksome job in his principality—and, that Aloysius would break his father's heart and bring him to his grave. Nor did Ferrante survive long after this. He was, without doubt, extremely ill. The strain on Aloysius must have been appalling, even though he can hardly have been, now, subjected to the worst strain of all—really not knowing on which side the right decision lay. He certainly could not foresee that his father was so soon to die, but even less, that he would die in joy, acknowledging to all, whole-heartedly, that Aloysius had been right, throughout, in what he had done. Less still can he have foreseen that the following of his vocation was the very thing—the one thing—that should ensure what his father was so eager for, the glory of the Gonzagas! It has been pathetically said, that were you to-day to ask some dweller in north Italy where even the ruins of the Gonzaga castles have all but disappeared, who the Gonzagas were, you would receive one answer only—‘No doubt they were the parents of San Luigi.’ The Marquis obtained everyone in Milan that he could, both priests and laymen, to argue with his son, and at last had himself carried to the Brera in order to see a certain Fr. Achilles Gagliardi, a theologian of really high repute. Gagliardi, in Ferrante's presence, examined Aloysius for an hour, and did so to such good purpose, alleging every conceivable reason against the young man's vocation, that his heart dropped a beat—he thought the priest really meant what he was saying. ‘No one,’ said Aloysius afterwards, ‘has ever felt my pulse like that before!’ Suddenly Gagliardi threw his cards down, and owned himself defeated. Aloysius, breathing once more, left the priest alone with Ferrante, who related his son's manner of life from the beginning, acknowledged the truth of his vocation, and promised he would give full leave, now, for his departure. He himself departed for Castiglione, and after a few days Aloysius followed him.

Alas. At Castiglione, Ferrante swung back. He would

not let him go. Aloysius, really angered, you would say, wrote both to Gagliardi and to the General. He asked whether he might not cut the knot by proceeding to Rome, permission or none. The General put answers to both letters into one cover and sent them to Gagliardi. His reply to the latter is preserved.¹

I have received along with Your Reverence's letter, the other sent to me from Sr. Luigi Gonzaga. My answer comes along with this letter, open, and with seal unfixed, so that you may see it, and then give it to him, and treat the matter conformably with it, and we cannot in any way persuade ourselves that the Lord Marquis his Father having acted in the manner that Your Rev. has heard is now for playing false, but these delays of which Sr. Luigi writes must be an effect of his Father's affection that but reluctantly can accept this separation. I was pleased that the young man has spoken fully to Your Rev., because all the better will you be able to encourage him and show him what best befits the greater service of God, I mean, that he ought to try, first, every other method before coming to what he was proposing, and so I hope that the Lord will guide the matter to a happy ending with peace and consolation, and let Your Rev. see to it that he be aided with prayers—as to how, I must leave it to your charity. (May 15th, 1585.)

Upon this answer, Aloysius apparently took the bit between his teeth and went off to Mantua, especially to see the Duchess who had helped him so much with the Emperor. He arrived in July, 1585. The moment was unpropitious. Mantua was off its head over the imminent arrival of ambassadors from some convert Japanese princes who, by way of Lisbon and Madrid, had visited the Pope (Gregory XIII, and then, after his death, Sixtus V) under the care of their Jesuit chaperones,

¹ It appears to have been printed for the first time by Giuseppe Schio in *San Luigi*, p. 118, presumably from a copy, or, from the draft made by the General's secretary.

and were now returning by way of Loreto and Mantua. Add to this, the city was still ringing with the scandals and festivities attendant on the second marriage of Vincent, heir to the dukedom. This really horrible young man, whose anæmic portrait does not at all prepare us to hear that he was to fight three times against the Turks—but a good deal of such fighting could be done from one's pavilion—had first been married to Margherita, daughter of Alexander Farnese, prince of Parma, in 1581. In 1583 Vincent asserted that the marriage was null and had it declared to be so. The girl retired into a convent. Vincent had been fond of a niece of the Duke of Bavaria, but since her dowry was only 60,000 ducats, he gave her up. William, the reigning duke, then announced that he wished to marry his son to Eleanor, daughter of Francis de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany—one of the little girls with whom Aloysius used to run races and cook, long ago in Florence. The furious Farnesi had made allegations that rendered anxious the Medici Grand Duke, and only after scenes of incredible ignominy, with which Italy rang, did he allow his daughter to marry Vincent. After Duke William died in 1587, Vincent was crowned on September 22nd, his crown being worth 150,000 scudi of gold, having in it a carbuncle worth 18,000. 10,000 ducats, in gold and silver, were thrown to the mob. He became a rapacious, extravagant, and dissolute prince, mad on actresses, and treacherous in politics. He died in 1612. As to his politics, he had some excuse for being pro-French while prince, pro-Spanish when duke. William's brother was Duke of Nevers in France and this created complications. Vincent hoped great posts, and above all money, from Spain, especially when in 1598 Clement VIII took possession of Ferrara (where his sister Margherita had been wife of Duke Alfonso II), for Vincent then went there in royal state and took back with him Archduchess Mary of Austria to Mantua and thence to Spain for her marriage with Philip III, and also Archduke Albert to marry the Infanta Isabella, daughter of Philip II. The escort was of 7,000 persons. November 20th-25th were spent in theatre-going and music,

and Vincent gave a diamond worth 12,000 golden scudi to her, and a gemmed sword to him. When Spain offered him none of the rewards he hoped for, he went Francewards again, to 'talk' with his cousin of Nevers over, I think, the exchange of Monferrato with Cremona. His visits multiplied themselves when Maria de' Medici married Henry IV: it was now that the question of actors bulked so large. Vincent was fiercely anti-Semite: had Rubens during eight years for his paid client: Porbus for his portrait-painter: Monteverde as composer of court-music. This patron of the arts was known to have done much for the liberation of Tasso, and under him the Gonzagas reached their apotheosis of rotten glory, and thenceforward sank rapidly. However at present everyone was running to Mantua to see the festivities, including Ferrante and Rodolfo: Aloysius realized that nothing could be done there, and took refuge in the Jesuit college where, under Fr. Antonio Valentino, he made a retreat and studied in detail the Jesuit Constitutions. Then he went back to Castiglione.

Very naturally, at his home he began to feel that the thing would never be ended. This is the moment of a great recrudescence of his penances, and so marked was his weakness that even his mother urged Ferrante to let him go, as he would be far safer under religious rule than left thus to himself. Yet during this time he was not only going about the town, so constantly saluted that his hat seemed to be continuously in his hand, but teaching his small brothers and sisters their catechism, and feeding them on sweets which he even gave to Rodolfo.

For some time, Aloysius had not returned, with his father, to the subject of his departure. At last he felt that the affair was dragging beyond all measure, and reminded Ferrante of the promise given. To his amaze, Ferrante said he had given no such promise, and that anyhow Aloysius was not nearly strong enough just now to enter a religious community, and that he would not become so before he was twenty-five. He added that Aloysius could go on his own account if he wished.

but that then he would be no more regarded as his father's son. Appalled, Aloysius withdrew.

He considered the new suggestion for a long while, and then, astonishingly enough, returned to say that he accepted. But he laid down two conditions : he must go to Rome, and cease to have such absolute havoc made of his studies ; and, his father must give him a letter for the General, giving his word that Aloysius should be allowed to enter the Society at the end of a specified time—two or three years.

Ferrante, fearful on his side lest Aloysius should be driven to extremes, agreed to this, and at once began to negotiate as to where Aloysius should live in Rome. He decided that it should be with Cardinal Vincent Gonzaga, son of Ferdinand Count of Guastalla, and forthwith wrote to Duke William to write to his cousin the Cardinal, to back the Marquis's request. The Duke said he would write, but must write first. Ferrante considered that *he* ought to write first. With true Gonzaga obstinacy, neither side would yield, so nobody wrote to the Cardinal, and Aloysius was freed from years of downright slavery. Ferrante then decided Aloysius had better stay in the Roman seminary, under the eye of the Jesuits, with a suite of apartments for himself and a number of servants. The Fathers regretted having to refuse this remarkable request. Ferrante wrote to Cardinal Scipio Gonzaga, asking him to approach Acquaviva, which he did, but the General said it was really impossible to agree. Ferrante then suggested to Aloysius that he had better write to the Duchess of Mantua, Eleanor of Austria, and ask *her* to intercede—the Society would hardly be able to refuse so eminent a benefactress. Aloysius hereupon became adamant. He said it was ridiculous. Only the other day he had got her to intercede with the Emperor that he might be allowed to abdicate everything : now he was to get her to obtain for him a suite of apartments that he did not want to have, and that no one wanted to give him. What would she think of such vacillation ? It may have been during this time that Aloysius, feeling sure that he was at least going to Rome soon, wrote to the General a letter

of which Cepari quotes the last lines (even so, in a Latin translation) 'leaving to one side,' says Fr. Rosa (*Lettere*: p. 21) 'all the informative part' of it. Re-translating it, we find that Aloysius says that he wished 'all this' to be known to the General, and also that "within a few days, so as the better to abandon this world, I shall put on the clerical dress, and renounce all my paternal inheritance, except what we have decided to reserve for pious purposes. Meanwhile I beg your Paternity to be absolutely certain that while I considered that this plan ought to be adhered to in the business, simply to satisfy my father, which Your Paternity told me I must be careful to do, yet nothing more serious could happen to me in life than to be coerced into putting off the execution of my vocation, since I recognize it as the greatest and highest benefit that the Divine Majesty could confer upon me: and please be sure that I would rather die a thousand times than abandon this determination to serve God."

Things at Castiglione were at a deadlock. Aloysius went back to prayer. One day, moved by a sudden and irresistible impulse, he rose from his knees, went straight to his father's room—Ferrante was in bed—and said: 'Father, I place myself entirely in your hands. Do as you please with me. But I assure you that I have been called to the Society of Jesus by God, and in resisting this vocation, you are resisting God.' Without waiting for an answer, he left the room.

Ferrante felt stricken to the heart: he turned his face to the wall and wept bitterly. After a long while, during which he refused to tell the anxious household what was troubling him, he sent for his son, and to him he said:

'Aloysius, you have wounded me to the heart, because I love you and have always loved you, as you deserve. On you are fixed all my hopes, and my family's. But since God, as you tell me, calls you, I will not stop you. Go where you wish, and I give you my blessing.'

Again he began to weep, and Aloysius, after a little, for fear of adding to his sorrow, left him. This time the die was cast.

During the month or so of final delay, when Ferrante went

to Mantua, apparently to complete the negotiations and also to ascertain his precise financial position, Aloysius wrote thrice more to him. The first letter is as follows, and sounds chill enough :

Most Illustrious Lord Father,

My Lady tells me to send you the enclosed news-sheets that Sig. Giovanni Ordandino has received from a nephew of his at Venice : which I herewith do, more because Her Ladyship asks me to and to give Your Lordship something to read, than for any authenticity or savour (*sugo* : juice) they may contain, save for the news of the plague, if it is true, which please God it may not be. Messer Pier Francesco has heard from Florence from Messer Giacopo that Don Giulio del Caccia has been made governor-general of the state of Siena. This is all that now occurs to me, as we are all well except that Lord Rodolfo has a little toothache : may His Divine Majesty please to keep you too in health, and to conclude I kiss your hands. Castiglione, Sept. 29, 1585.

The next day he wrote again :

Most Illustrious Lord Father,

I send Your Lordship the list of things that have to be got here. Master Tullio considers that the season being so far advanced makes *rasetta* (or *rasetto* ; a thin cloth) useless for everything save stockings, for which it will do ; also it would serve for a travelling coat, if he likes. Further he thinks that he had better carry out the list I send, since I have to go in clerical dress. However, if Fr. Prospero [Fr. Prospero Malavolta, rector of the College at Mantua] does not think I have to change my clothes before (actually) entering religion, there would be little or nothing more left to do. For my part, I do not mind one way or the other what they judge best in Mantua. After all, as the Council says, it isn't the cowl that makes the monk. For the rest, what concerns me personally, I will go on waiting, and hoping that Your Lordship will arrange for things to be done

quickly, as the season of the year demands [it was autumn and the roads would be soon very bad : and perhaps the year of noviciate began already about that time, as it does now], and so, kissing your hands, I pray for you from the Lord the full restoration of your health. Castiglione, Sept. 29, 1585.¹ Your Most Illustrious Lordship's very obedient son, Aluigi Gonzaga.

This letter is preserved in the Trivulziana library of Milan : it was first printed in 1891 in the Archivio Lombardo, fasc. ii, but then lapsed out of notice. It was not observed that it makes an end of the usual suggestion that Aloysius had had an ecclesiastical dress secretly prepared for him at Mantua, and engineered a sensational apparition in it after his renunciation. It was like him, no doubt, to change his clothes directly the deed was signed (as I shall tell), but, as Fr. Rosa rightly says, his mind was serene and well-balanced and quite superior to manifestos, even pious ones.

Next day in fact he writes :

Most Illustrious Lord Father,

Lord Rodolfo received Your Lordship's letter this morning, which I answer in his name because he finds himself in bed with a slight temperature in which his toothache has ended. He has carried out your orders **except** going to make the country visits owing to his indisposition. But Sgr. Antonio will not fail. Yesterday I sent the list of the things which are waiting for Master Tullio to set to work on. Anything else Your Lordship will hear from others ; so I will not go on to say more save to kiss your hands and pray to our Lord to preserve you. Castiglione, Oct. 1, 1585.

Soon enough, the whole town knew of the decision. Aloysius was thronged by his people : they ran to the windows and doors as he passed. They really did feel orphaned and

¹ September 29th is, as so often, a slip for September 30th ; for the letter of October 1st, quoted below, says he sent the list ' yesterday ' ; besides, the letter previously quoted is the one written on September 29th.

abandoned. He could but answer that no man might serve two masters—neither they, nor he.

In a few days he left Castiglione, his carriage followed by the weeping crowds. He had had to wait for his mother, who was at Turin visiting the Duchess of Savoy, and he had to go to Mantua, because the Emperor had insisted that every single member of the Gonzaga family, who might become heir should all Ferrante's sons fail to survive, should assist at the abdication. And lo, a further maddening delay. The Jesuits had been told of the pension destined to Aloysius's personal use, and now said that he could not accept it. It could be paid, if the Marquis liked, to the house where his son lived, or not at all. Ferrante on his side was absolutely determined not to give the money to a community—Aloysius should have it, or nobody. Aloysius said he had not the slightest wish to have it. Ferrante agreed that nobody should, all the more readily because he had been travelling about with his wife and children for so long, and even accepting hospitality was, in those days, as expensive as it is now. If you add in his gambling debts, you can realize that every ducat counted. The Marquis, then, cut down his other charities too: abroad, he said, he had not noticed what he spent: 'but now, when the sun shines, the damage is more visible.' Aloysius wrote to the General that he was not sorry to enter the Society poorer than he had expected, but that he hoped his father would pay up later on. Whereupon the lawyers said that to alter even one clause in the document that the Emperor had ratified, might invalidate the whole. Two months were spent in these intolerable negotiations, till at last the deed was in satisfactory form. The paragraph concerning this, inserted in the enormous legal document of which both the Mantuan original and a Gonzagan copy exist, is so remarkable and so unlike the rest of the document and in fine so like Aloysius's way of expressing himself, that we can hardly resist the conclusion that he practically dictated it. After the clause stating that Rodolfo was to pay 2,000 ducats down and 200 annually to be 'at the absolute discretion of the same Illustrious Lord the

resigner and donor,' it continues : But as he afterwards learnt that, according to the constitutions of the above-mentioned venerable Society of the Jesuits, all those who seek admission into it must, before they can begin to live under obedience in any of its houses or colleges, first renounce and distribute all the temporal goods which they possess, and must also dispose of all those which may come to them, and as the Illustrious Lord Aloysius . . . is unwilling that the conditional clause, which could not hold good according to the Jesuit Constitution, should be any hindrance to him in the attainment of his desire, especially as he knows that they who strive after Christian holiness, not with common and ordinary resolve and determination, but with such earnestness and purpose as to condemn and abandon all earthly riches and perishable goods do really best consult their own interests, he has a firm hope and trust that the most Illustrious Emperor, by reason of his great piety, goodness and fear of God, will not frustrate this his intention or anything contained in this present deed, but will graciously and bountifully, as he humbly implores His Imperial Majesty, confirm it, even without the aforesaid conditional clause which is made in favour of the worldly interests of Signor Aloysius and ought not for that reason to be a detriment to his spiritual welfare. He is resolved without further delay to carry out his fixed will and intentions.

November 2nd arrived. The Gonzagas all assembled in the palace of St. Sebastian. And as Aloysius entered, for the last time in his lay life the Gonzaga temper flamed. Some of the courtiers started to criticize and to argue. But he controlled himself, listened to the document, which seemed interminable, being read, went to the table and signed. He turned then to Rodolfo, who could scarcely conceal his delight, and said : ' Which of us two is the happier ? I am sure it is I.' And indeed, they said, they had never seen the young man so radiant, nor his face so flushed. He went then to his room, stayed there in prayer for a long time, and then took off his court clothes, down even to his silk stockings, and put on the religious habit he meant thenceforth to wear and that the

chaplain of the palace, Don Luigi Cattaneo, had blessed, and in it returned to the great banquet with which the day concluded. At this meal, it was he who was serene, at his ease, talkative; and before it ended, it was they who began to feel the horrible suspicion that can come to men, that somehow their life is an illusion, is moving on lines that lead no-whither: they felt that a choice had been made by one of their own blood that not they, with all their gallantry, would have had power to make.

Next day Aloysius resumed for the last time his secular dress, bade farewell to the Duke, and asked his parents' blessing. They gave it with many tears: and Aloysius felt thereafter that he had done enough. He refused to go the round of the court and to see the ladies-in-waiting. He promised to pray for them and for all that he was leaving, and next day left Mantua, he thought, for ever.¹

¹ Professor Iozzi printed another letter which that same day Aloysius wrote to Acquaviva: the letter is, however, regarded as unauthentic: it runs as follows:

My Lord and Father Most Reverend in our Lord,

This very day I have stripped off the dress of the 'old man,' and have put on vestem novi hominis—that of the 'new man,' whereof I inform Your Reverence and assure you that I do not know how to thank God for so great a grace most blessed, all the more so as to-day He has deigned to give me a new consolation, permitting me to follow Him in poverty; for my father is no more prepared to assign to me what he had promised and to which he had bound himself. However he will pay for my journey and incidentals. I pray the blessed God that He will do all for the best and, if He also thinks it expedient, that my Lord Father find himself in a situation to fulfil his promise in favour of the Society. However I have letters ad hoc both from the Superiors of the college here and from my Lady Mother which I will present to Your Reverence, whom genibus humiliter flexis ex toto corde—kneeling humbly, and with all my heart—I pray for the love of God to receive me out of charity into the harbour of escape and safety and quam-primum—so soon as may be—for I will make efforts not to prolong over-much the visits that I must pay during my journey, and to conclude I kiss your hands: Mantua, Nov. 2, 1585.

CHAPTER VII

TENDIMUS IN PATRIAM

*The song of all both high and low
To some blest vision true . . .
The song of Kings of Kingdoms when
They rise above their fortunes men
And crown themselves anew—
The song of courage, heart and will
And gladness in a fight . . .
And song of some at holy war
With spell and ghoulds more dread by far
Than deadly seas and cities are
Or hordes of quarrelling Kings.*

Ralph Hodgson : *The Song of Honour.*

THE retinue was large. Don Luigi Cattaneo was the chaplain ; Giovanni Battista Bono, a doctor, who conducted the expedition ; del Turco, his old tutor, went with him. To Ghizoni, his special valet, who had never left him since boyhood, he said good-bye at Mantua, and left him weeping his heart out : other servants now replaced him. There were many others besides these, and Rodolfo came in the carriage as far as the river. There Aloysius said good-bye to him, but scarcely spoke. On the boat, one of his gentlemen said that Rodolfo must be delighted at succeeding thus to the Marquisate : ' Not half so glad,' repeated Aloysius, ' as I am to have got rid of it ! ' Down the wide river they sailed to Ferrara to say good-bye to the Duke, Alfonso d'Este, who had married his kinswoman Margherita Gonzaga. Turning his back on that tremendous and tragic castle, destined now to so short a life before the Popes seized the duchy, he made for Bologna, intending to visit first the Grand Duke of Tuscany at Florence, and to go thus to Loreto, to fulfil his mother's vow, made at his birth. It is true that she had been dispensed from it, but he wished none the less to prove his gratitude for the care that God had shown him ever since childhood. However,

at the frontiers of Tuscany, at a place called Pietra Mala, he was turned back, as being unable to prove he had not passed through spots that were plague-stricken. The escort insisted, making the most of the Gonzaga name: useless: they returned therefore to Bologna. Aloysius wrote his regrets to the Grand Duke, which he sent later on by his retinue on their homeward journey. Bologna with its leaning towers was, in its turn, left behind, and they went by the Flaminian way to Loreto.

For once he did not stay in the Jesuit house, even when invited by the Rector. He felt freer in an inn. On the morning of his arrival, he heard Mass after Mass in the Holy House, and then received Communion, causing all his escort to receive it at his side. After dinner he returned there, but his name had been divulged: people crowded to look at him, and privacy was over. It may have been here that he bought a copy of the Loretan Madonna, which he kept till it passed into the hands of Prince Hannibal Gonzaga and thence from one to another till it came to the convent in Vienna where it is. Next morning, Aloysius paid his final visit to the shrine, and left for Rome.

On the journey, he was very silent, and each day was a prayer. He used to make a quarter of an hour's meditation when he rose, and then learnt from the priest how to say the Divine Office, which he had never yet done. He used before starting to recite Prime and the Little Hours, and then the *Itinerarium*, and then only, mounted his horse. He rode, as a rule, alone, reciting the simple prayers that he had never, since childhood, omitted, or meditating, undisturbed by the rough paths. At midday, or when they stopped to see to the horses, he made his own meal, and then said Vespers and Compline with Don Cattaneo. Even now, the splendid vision of the foreign missions floated before him: the hard life he foresaw beckoned to him as gallantly as ever: and from time to time he talked happily of this with Cattaneo.

When they reached their quarters for the night, he went first to his room, in which he would tolerate no fire, though it was

November, and there prayed, taking in his hands the little crucifix he wore always round his neck. He was watched, as ever, by the irrepressible escort, through cracks in the door that we can understand better in those ramshackle hostelrys than in palaces. Before supper, he sent for the priest, and with him said Matins and Lauds. He was forbidden during this journey to fast : but from now on, says Dr. Bono, who managed the caravan, Aloysius refused to allow the servants to help him off with his clothes when he went to bed. The days of valeting were over. And a curious little consequence of his inexperience ! Till his change of dress, at Mantua, he had never worn cloth stockings. His fingers, frozen, could not manipulate them, whereas the silk, I suppose, rolled off easily. Once, Don Luigi, present while Aloysius was trying to undress, took pity on his struggles, insisted on helping him, and found that his legs and feet were like icicles. Yet it proved useless to suggest a fire.

At last the walls of new St. Peter's massed themselves on the horizon. Not for five years were the lines of the tremendous dome to sweep upwards to the Cross. Yet Rome was the goal of all his hopes, and no pilgrim of old could ever have saluted its very smoke more joyously. They went straight to the house of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Scipio Gonzaga, and there rested. Apparently that very day, Aloysius went to the Gesù, and the General, hearing of his arrival, came down into the garden to meet him. Aloysius knelt, and, exhausted by the journey and having used up, one would say, all his reserves of strength, now that he had reached his home found himself too weak to rise. A witness tells how the General had to help him. He then presented the letter which his father had entrusted to him for Claudius Acquaviva. The letter reveals the Marquis as the true nobleman that he was :

Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Sir,

My profound respects. In the past I considered it to be my duty to refuse to this my son Aloysius permission to enter your holy Society, for I feared that owing to his youth

he might embark upon his enterprise without that firm resolution which were right. Now I think that I am sure that it is God who is calling him thither, and so I should feel it on my conscience were I to refuse him the permission that he has longed to receive, and has prayed for from me so urgently and so often. So, freely and willingly, with my mind at peace and full of God's good consolation, I send him and commend him to Your Reverence, who will be to him a more helpful Father than I can be. I have nothing here to add concerning the person of my son. I merely say, that I am giving into Your Reverence's hands the most precious thing that I possess in all the world, and my chiefest hope, that I placed entirely in him, of maintaining and giving glory to my Family : my Family henceforward will regard, as its great protection, his prayers and those of Your Reverence, to whom I offer all my respects, and for whom I beg from the Lord all the happiness that you can desire. Mantua. Nov. 3, 1585. Your Reverence's most devoted servant, the Prince Marquis of Castiglione.

Aloysius then went back to the Patriarch's house, and one witness relates how he had been given by Aloysius the task of telling him, after his evening hour of prayer, when it was time for bed, but that tired out by the journey, he himself went to sleep, and had to be woken up by the tutor at midnight, and was sent to tell Aloysius that he must go to bed, for the lad, unconscious of the hours, still was praying. If one asks why the tutor did not go himself, I suppose that when Aloysius had told one person to look after him, he would not have liked another to intrude.

The next days passed in a series of visits to the Cardinals then in Rome—Farnese, Alessandrino Ghisleri, the nephew of Pope Pius V, d'Este and Medici ; and having done this, they made the round of those churches which constitute the ' Stations.' They were then, says the Itinerary (see p. 57), ' in general bare inside, without any pictures, except some few about the altars . . . (to visit them) I and my consorts hired each of us a mule, each man for 2 poli, and we never found our

error till the evening, when we demanding the way of a man of meane sort, he replied this with some anger : 'What doe you ride toe heaven, and we poore wretches goe on foote without shooes to visit these holy Churches.' The Englishman, determined to regard his stay in Rome as one long perilous adventure, describes himself as having passed the rest of the day 'without further danger.' Yet a few years before, as I shall say, his fears might not have been so groundless. The Pope, whom Aloysius now went to visit, had but quite recently cleared away the footpads that made the city one vast ambush.

Aloysius, then, betook himself to the Vatican. I cannot tell by what gates he entered it : at least the approach to St. Peter's was very different from what it is to-day. The Church was much shorter, in the form of a Latin Cross, and so the immemorial square atrium before it, with Pope Damsus's fountain, had not been destroyed, and the stairs up which Charlemagne climbed upon his knees, were still in front of it ; nor was the façade of to-day yet erected, nor was the piazza girt with its glorious colonnades, and within the basilica the baldacchino with its writhing columns was not built. Indeed, but three years after the death of Aloysius, while the architect was levelling the floor above the 'Confession,' in order to set up the new altar, the pavement collapsed, and St. Peter's tomb was visible, having on it the great gold cross placed there by Constantine, and inscribed with his own name and his mother's. The Pope, and Bellarmine, came to see it : overwhelmed with awe, Clement VIII ordered the vault to be re-sealed, and never since then has the sacred tomb been contemplated. Into the basilica, then, without marbles or mosaics, without statues in its niches, but with the Tomb and the great image of St. Peter ever present, Aloysius went, before passing up^{er} to see the Pope.

Sixtus V had been elected Pope that same year, 1585. In many ways he was the man then needed. His father, they said, had been in a very small way, and Felice Peretti had, in his boyhood, kept the swine. He became a Franciscan at the age of twelve, and, his sermons having attracted notice, he at

last found himself made Cardinal by St. Pius V. Elected Pope, he changed altogether the quiet self-effacing life of his Cardinalate, and showed himself the one man, Queen Elizabeth is said to have said, whom she thought worthy to marry her. The change in him is figured in the myth that he entered the conclave on crutches, which, at his election, he threw away. The chaos of the Papal States and of Rome itself was unthinkable. It was impossible to move without being set upon by bandits, noble or mean. Between his election and his coronation, the Pope had executed already four brothers, carrying arms illegally. Law and order were to be imposed at all costs, and the impossible was done. Within a year, Rome and the Papal States were safe. Pasquino, the epigrammatist, made a tale for the statues of St. Peter and St. Paul on the bridge of St. Angelo—St. Peter was seen slinking away and St. Paul asked him whither he was bound. He was off, said the apostle, lest he should be executed for cutting off Malchus's ear. But the constructive work of this Pope was double—literally constructive, since it was he who first hacked great streets through Rome, disregarding antiquities, churches, and palaces, and then erected the new palace of the Lateran, the great stairs, so familiar to English visitors, that lead up to Trinità de' Monti, turned the ancient Aqua Marcia into the Acqua Felice, finished within two years what the Romans deemed impossible—the cupola of St. Peter's: placed the images of SS. Peter and Paul on the columns of Marcus Aurelius and of Trajan, and raised in front of the Vatican basilica that obelisk that had seen the martyrdom of St. Peter and the games of Nero, and that had lain for so long half-buried on the west side of St. Peter's. At the trumpet of this Pope, wrote a contemporary, the gigantic half-buried body that lay on the Roman fields has felt its limbs respond—a new Rome has risen from its ashes. But also, it was Sixtus who with broad financial action placed once more on a firm basis the papal exchequer and amassed indeed incredible sums of money: it was he too who developed the system of Roman congregations, which still exist for the departmental manage-

ment of papal affairs, and he correspondingly disliked those new institutions, not of his creation, of which the Society of Jesus was one. It was, then, in the very year when Rome was learning that execution followed murder—a sort of regenerative reign of terror, that Aloysius came there.

Aloysius found that the Vatican had been forewarned of his visit: the corridors had filled with courtiers come to stare at this 'monstrosity of a Gonzaga'—a man who had taken all the hereditary force of that family, and had turned it full against what they had always used it for—self-enrichment; self-aggrandisement; self-worship. Perhaps the Pope himself felt anxious: when Aloysius knelt before him, Sixtus catechized him at great length concerning his motives, and especially, whether he had sufficiently weighed the extreme wearisomeness of the religious life. Strange contrast, between the old man and the young! The Pope, who from the humblest rank had scaled the supreme platform of papal power: the prince, at his feet, asking only to come down to the earth trodden by the least of his fellow-servants of our Lord: the Pope, having forgotten, one would say, in his old age, not a little of the ideal of his Franciscan youth; and the lad who sweated blood to be finished with the coins, the coronets, the castles. No wonder the Pope asked himself if it could last: if disillusionment were in store for Aloysius: if the vision would fade and the high enterprise be abandoned. Aloysius answered that he had fully thought out his plan; and the Pope, satisfied, praised him and dismissed him.

The day before, Friday, Aloysius had fasted on bread and water: to-day, he had eaten nothing yet, and the Pope could not see him till late afternoon. When he reached home, naturally he felt faint. Frightened, for a moment, lest he were becoming ill and lest there should be more delay, he found with gratitude that the indisposition passed. Next day, he went to Communion in the chapel of SS. Abundius and Abundantius beneath the high altar of the Gesù, and then went up into a tribune to listen to the sermon. The General of the Society had invited the Patriarch and Aloysius to dine:

during dinner, the usual reading aloud was suppressed, and Aloysius had to listen, instead, to another sermon suited to the occasion.

At last, on the morning of November 25th, feast of St. Catherine, whom Aloysius regarded afterwards as the patron of his religious life, he, the Patriarch, and all their retinues went up to Monte Cavallo, where the Pope was to place the great stone heroes beside their prancing horses, and entered the chapel of Sant' Andrea on the Quirinal. The Patriarch said Mass, and gave Aloysius Communion with his own hand. The General then followed them to the house, and the Rector, John Baptist Pescatore, entertained them all at the last of these festivities Aloysius had to undergo. After this, he said good-bye to his suite, thanking especially Dr. Bono for his company, ordering his Majordomo to go to Leghorn and salute the Grand Duke of Tuscany whom he had failed to see, and entrusted a special message for his mother to his valet. He asked Cattaneo to say, in his name, to Ferrante : ' Forget thy people and thy father's house,' bringing thus his departure under the shadow and consolation of Holy Scripture, and reminding the Marquis that he had not gone, because he had no love for home, but, that he loved God more. Asked for a message for Rodolfo, he answered with a certain austerity : ' He who fears God, will do right.' To the Patriarch, he expressed the intensest gratitude for his loyal help ; and Scipio, who was easily touched, wept, and said it was Aloysius who had chosen the better part, and that he envied him. As he left, the old man said to the Fathers that he left an angel in their midst, and then, with many tears, the final good-byes were spoken.

Thereupon Pescatore took Aloysius to his room. As he entered it, he exclaimed : ' This is my rest for ever and ever—here will I dwell, for I have chosen it.' The master of novices withdrew ; the door closed ; and Aloysius was at last alone.

PART II

*It were disloyalty, you say, to change
Your loving birthright . . .
You will not sell your freedom. . . .*

*I claim a larger freedom. If in line
I serve with others, all their strength is mine.
The large consent uplifts me upon wings.
And in the faces of the men that die
Obedient to the bugle, I descry
The seal and mandate of the King of Kings.*

MAURICE BARING, *The Conscript.*

CHAPTER I

SCALPR : SALUBRIS ICTIBUS

*These laid the world away ; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth ;
... they brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage ;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again,
And we have come into our heritage.*

Rupert Brooke: *The Dead.*

ALOYSIUS was now in the noviciate of Sant' Andréa, a house on the Quirinal separated only by a road from what was then the Pope's summer palace. In 1565 the bishop of Tivoli gave the little parish church there to St. Francis Borgia, who began by allowing the sick priests from the Gesù to stay there on account of the high position and healthy air. Next year, the duchess of Tagliacozzo, mother of Marco Antonio Colonna, gave him part of a house and a garden she possessed there, and he removed so many of the novices thither as there was room for. There, in 1568, St. Stanislaus died, when Aloysius was not yet one year old. By the time when Aloysius arrived, the place had been much added to though the present church was not finished till about 1670. Aloysius brought with him two cassocks, one long and one short, which, he was soon disconcerted to find, he had had made of finer cloth than what was customary in the Society, and two caps, but these too proved to be of a more clerical aspect than what the other novices wore, and he was uncomfortable till he had obtained another of the normal shape. Besides these, he had two jackets, an overcoat, an indoor coat, two pair of cloth breeches and stockings, two pair of linen stockings, a red waistcoat, twelve shirts, twelve pair of shoes (!), twelve pocket-handkerchiefs, a felt hat, nine towels, a trunk, and a picture

of the crucifixion. The young man, who had thought he was reducing himself to extremest poverty, might have been told that all this was worth just four times what the average novice brought. Alone among the novices, for some reason, he did not sign the inventory of what he brought with him : perhaps, because it was felt to be so certain he would stay, that the formality was deemed unnecessary.

He was at once put into the preliminary retreat that forms part of the ' first probation ' : during it, his servants and the others started on their homeward journey, and called to renew their good-byes. He felt that the interview would be unnecessary : it was no good to re-open what had been settled, and he sent them an affectionate message, and they returned without seeing him.

As a matter of fact, this retreat was abbreviated, partly because he had not long ago made the complete Exercises at Mantua, and had very carefully studied the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus : but also, he felt ill. The Fr. Piatti who was to know him so well at the Gesù, had seen him on his arrival, and wrote to his friend Mutius Vitelleschi, afterwards General, and then studying theology at Naples, not only recounting the advent of so unusual a novice, but, saying how shocked he was to see him look so ill. However, he added, orders had been given that every kind of precaution be taken to build his strength up. The reasons offered for his breakdown were, that the food and the climate were new to him, and, that he entered upon his retreat with too much strain. I cannot but think that, while this may be so, the sudden *removal* of a strain had no less to do with it. Abruptly to find that you have no more to fight, that you really have reached the haven of your desires, may induce a reaction as exhausting as any effort. This seems to me the more likely, because either actually during this retreat, or at the beginning of his noviciate, Aloysius found that he had lost all the cheerfulness, all the sweetness of religion, that had usually been his. It is true that he found that when he was actually praying, some of the cloud lifted. These trials can be truly described as ' sent ' by God to test

a man : I think however that we may also say that God uses what almost inevitably happens to such a man as Aloysius was, further to purify his soul and to consolidate his perseverance. For, say what you will, his life and each day were now perfectly and paradoxically different from anything he had hitherto preferred. He had always been very silent : now he had the official recreations, during which silence is no virtue. He had fasted rigorously ; now he was made to eat as much in a day as he had in a week : he begged permission to do penances, only to find the leave refused. It must have seemed to him, as it does to many novices who arrive ablaze with fervour, that he had but come to an empty and comfortable life—compared at least to what he had foreseen. Add to this, that he had been hitherto very much his own master. He had chosen to do hard things, but *he* had dictated them to himself, and had done them with incredible tenacity against every kind of opposition. When he was interfered with, he redoubled his resolve. Hence, what Fr. Meschler calls a ‘certain arbitrariness and lack of discipline’ in those old days. Besides, he had always given himself very long stretches, so to say, of occupation. In the noviciate, though the order of the day was then far looser than it is now, yet his time was cut up into fragments : he was never able to brood upon anything, but was handed on from one novice-superior, in the small jobs about the house, to another. Finally, everyone noticed, and again and again remarked, how extraordinarily ‘grown-up’ he was. I have already commented on this. His words were very few, and he always thought out accurately what he ought to say. Now there are plenty of records to show that young men of those days, even in noviciates, might be grown up in one sense, but were quite as childish in other ways as ever they can be now. I imagine that Aloysius, arriving among these novices with his mind completely formed, his religious habits no less established, his ideals soaringly high and sweepingly vast, must have found plenty of the conversation very trying, and since he neither could nor would join in it,

he presumably was felt as sufficiently trying by the others. We shall see that he was criticised. I am not at all concerned to suggest that Aloysius had nothing to learn. He would have been the last man to imagine any such thing. 'I am a piece of twisted iron,' he said, with relentless accuracy of self-assessment: 'and I entered religion to get twisted straight.'

It was too at this time that his soul swung for a space to and fro beneath opposing gusts of conceit and despondency of self. The old temptation to think that he had done a fine thing in coming here, returned, but only to be followed by its contrary—'I shall be no use to the Society.' I cannot but think that the kind of life he was being made to lead did indeed seem the opposite of all that he had expected and for which he had prepared himself. He was made to pray less: fast less: do far fewer penances. He was asked to talk, to be ordinary. Small wonder if his soul, folded and re-folded back upon itself, and displaying itself to God alone, seemed a different sort of soul to what was wanted. Aloysius had a very clear notion of his qualities, and the Holy Father himself has drawn attention to this: so it was not mere self-disesteem, as though he foolishly believed himself to be totally destitute of any good point whatsoever, that made him wonder whether after all he was fit for the Society or could serve it. He seemed to see that he had not the *requisite* qualities. However, his will was set: his mind made up. He had chosen, and out of *that* choice no one and nothing should untwist the iron. He would learn: he would become what was needed, God helping. And how should he do that? By living very exactly the life indicated him, sure that you could not go wrong if you obeyed.

¶ The simplest thing, then, to say about Aloysius during this time is, that he threw himself with all his strength into the new life that was his. Remember that this means on the whole three things—that he had always been incredibly literal-minded, and was so now: that he had always done the maximum of anything that he did at all: that his literal-

ness, this maximizing tendency will now have to show itself in very small matters indeed. The noviceship is a tissue of minutiae. Save the general upshot of the training, nothing matters really. But since everything does enter into a general training, each thing matters very much, for it would be a frightful thing to reject the ordinary life to which men are called, embark upon a training that has no object whatsoever but to produce a certain character, and then not to do that training properly. Not only would that character not be created, but the character which sound worldly experience would have been creating, would have escaped the grasp; and indeed, it may be thought that a religious training, badly or but partially assimilated, makes it harder to develop adequately any other character later on, should the religious life be abandoned. So it is a very serious thing indeed to enter a noviciate, and Aloysius recognized this to the utmost.

Hence the chronicler of any noviciate, let alone Aloysius's, *can* have little save minutiae to relate. And when you get a man of his temperament pouring the full energy of his will out upon a thing in itself trifling, which he takes none the less with extreme literalness, you will feel you are watching something out of perspective, or exaggerated. His contemporaries thought him exaggerated. Very many remarks both in his Life and in the Bollandist notes show this to have been so, not to emphasize the advice he was constantly receiving about his penances. Instances of what I mean are, that, being told that novices must not look about in the refectory, he became anxious because once or twice his eyes had wandered, out of curiosity, he thought. Not even to Cardinals, his relatives, visiting the house, would he speak in silence-hours without permission—and to refuse to a Cardinal, in those days, what he expected, seemed little less than sacrilege. It was impressed on him that one must not use idle words: having to go to the Professed House, he asked whether it would be idle to use that word, 'Professed,' since there was no other house to which he could be going, and 'House' ought to be enough. You have to be quite sure that Aloysius

put absolutely out of his head every thought save this : ' I have undertaken *this* sort of life. *It* and it alone is the life I mean to lead. I propose then to follow with complete accuracy every hint, every suggestion, and of course every order I receive '—and he carried out that resolution with the full force of the unflinching will that ever had been his. I do not mean to put down every detail of this sort. People treasured up each minutest fact that they could recall about him, and since the facts were in any case minute, a whole catalogue of these tininesses could be made. But I think they divert the attention. They put his centre of gravity where it was not. He knew perfectly well that these things were not in themselves important, but he was equally sure that in their setting they were, and, that till the call came to do great things, he must faithfully do the little ones. And so clear-sighted were his superiors, that they never once failed to see in him a greatness of soul suited to greatness of deed : almost at once, men felt sure he would some day be General of the Society, and he got nicknamed ' our *Generalino*, ' our young General ; and Mutius Vitelleschi, in fact, would not believe, later on, that Aloysius was dying, because he felt so sure that God had brought him to the Society simply that he might rule it.

Almost at once, however, he was put to the test in a very different way. The departure of Aloysius had made an extraordinary change in his father. Even before this, the Marquis had become quite clear that his son's call was from God : but now he seemed a different man. To everybody's amazement he entirely gave up gambling, which had been his master-passion. Still confined to his room with gout, he caused the ebony and silver crucifix which Aloysius kept in his room, to be transferred to his own, and every day, his servant reciting the words so that he might repeat them, he went through the seven penitential psalms, weeping bitterly. At first he himself could not understand himself, nor these tears, till at last he exclaimed that he knew who had earned them for him—his son, away in Rome. Such too was

the opinion of his third son, Francis, who confessed that at first he could not understand what mystery lay beneath this change. As a matter of fact, no sooner had the court chaplain, Cattaneo, returned from Rome, than the Marquis made him a general confession, and then began the regular prayers I mentioned. This confession took place at the shrine of Our Lady of Graces near Mantua, for when his illness began to get serious he had himself taken there. The picture of Our Lady had been there, it is said, so early as the year 1000 : in 1399 Francis Gonzaga, fourth lord of Mantua, vowed a large church to Our Lady if the plague might abate. It did so, and the church was built that still stands, though heavily restored. Popes and kings visited it, and the sanctuary became famous. When his illness became really grave, he had himself taken to Milan, and late one evening Francis Gonzaga, who had been of such service to Aloysius in Spain, called, and at once Ferrante guessed that so late a visit meant that he must prepare at once for death. He asked for a confessor, made his will, and died very peacefully on February 13th, 1586. Francis Gonzaga and others wrote at once to Aloysius. Aloysius loved his father intensely, and for the moment was heartbroken. He wrote on the day that he heard the news to his mother, but before the letter reached her, she wrote herself, begging to hear from him : he wrote then a second time, on April 10th :

Most Illustrious Mother and Honoured Lady in Christ,

The Peace of Christ. From a letter from the Father Minister of Mantua, I feel you need the consolation which I see you wish from a letter from me, in the midst of the grief for the loss of my Father of happy memory. I earnestly wish to remind you in my present letter of what I recommended to you in my last, that is, resignation to the divine will, wherein since he persevered all his life, we may well hope that God, who has called him to Himself by so happy a death, will have admitted him thereby to that happy life whereafter we all sigh ; so that we ought rather to rejoice than to grieve, when those whom we love have reached

their home ; hoping also in that God, who by His fatherly providence, that has care of all, has ordered the thing thus. *He* will not fail to pray, especially for those who recommend themselves to him, like Your Ladyship Most Illustrious and your House, in doing which I for my part have never ceased, and never will cease praying His Divine Majesty to console and guide you. Nor have I failed to receive a consoling reward in the news that all has gone well with Lord Rodolfo my brother, whom, besides what I advised him in another letter some days ago, I think I ought not to cease from reminding how helpful I should judge would be for him the services of Doctor Salustio, who suggested himself to me by letter, for various reasons, which, since you and Rodolfo can examine them at close quarters, he, if he remembers, will be able to follow out what the Lord shall dictate to him, from whom I beg, in conclusion, every happiness for you. From Rome, April 10, 1586. Your Most Illustrious Ladyship's most obedient son in Christ, Aluigi Gonzaga of the Society of Jesus.¹

¹ Another letter is quoted by Iozzi. It is said to be unauthentic, and so we do not incorporate it in the text. It reads as follows :
Most Illustrious Lady and most honoured Mother in Christ,

The Peace of Christ ! The death of His Lordship my Father was when I heard it a true grief to my heart and I felt overwhelmed by it till I had given free scope to the grief wherein human nature needs to relieve itself. But now I have reason for gladness in thinking that from to-day forward I have reason to call him Father truly and to thank our Lord as that it is a joy to hope in His infinite mercy He has taken him to the world of heavenly joys. With holy resignation and spiritual consolation let us submit ourselves to the rulings of His Divine Majesty with which I finish and beg your blessing from Rome, April, 1586. Your Most Illustrious Ladyship's most obedient son in Christ, Aluigi Gonzaga of the Society of Jesus.

The objections to it appear to be (1) that Ferrante died in February, Aloysius wrote the very day on which he heard the news ; this letter is dated ' April,' and a month and a half is too long to allow between the 13th of February, and the arrival of the news in Rome ; (2) that Aloysius says he was overwhelmed by the news, whereas Cepari says he showed no signs of distress ; (3) that Cepari also says that Aloysius began his letter by saying that he thanked God he could now more freely say ' Our Father who art in heaven,' whereas in this letter the remark occurs at the end ; and (4) that the Italian orthography is inconsistent. It might be answered that Aloysius very often made mistakes in his dates, even of a month at a time, as we have seen ; that Aloysius certainly felt things sharply, however little he might

Aloysius had not paraded his grief. Everyone was struck by his serenity and self-control: for my part, I am impressed by the clear-sighted justice of the young man who could see, and emphasize, the fundamental goodwill of the father who had so strenuously resisted his vocation. Ferrante, Aloysius saw, had acted as he should, preserving almost without guessing it, but unmistakably to the intuition of his son, true resignation to God's will. Each, as I said, really understood the other. I think that if Aloysius made himself rather difficult when asked about his family, and professed to have to count when people enquired how many brothers and sisters he had—there had been eight children altogether—this was because he did not wish to talk about his home at all, which even apart from ascetical considerations, was but in good taste. However, he used to quote his father on one point—whatever line of life you adopt, the old Marquis used to say, make the very most of it.² Hence he used not to think

express his feelings, though from time to time, as we also see, he did so. Many a man or woman of self-control will be careful to express no whit of what they are suffering, in public, even though their motives be not heavenly ones. That does not prevent their suffering, and even letting one with whom they are on specially intimate terms (as Aloysius was with his mother) perceive it. I think Cepari might have found a phrase remain in his mind, if it struck him, and yet after some years make a mistake about the precise place in a letter where it occurred. Finally, Aloysius's 'style,' his punctuation, his syntax, do not seem to me so very consistent in his undoubted letters; his repetitions of words are on the other hand characteristic—'I have reason for gladness in thinking . . . that I have reason.' And in a moment of sudden shock, his style may well have been even less cared-for, if indeed this letter suggests that here it is so. 'The forgery,' says the latest editor of the Letters, 'is done with art': the less likely does it seem to me that a forger, who has all the facts before him (as Iozzi had—date of Ferrante's death; Cepari's assertion that Aloysius wrote the very day he heard of it; Cepari's assertion that the phrase quoted came at the beginning of the letter), would have been so incredibly clumsy as to put 'April' by accident, and to insert a phrase, which he could only have learned from Cepari, just where Cepari says it was not, viz., at the end. Still, since it appears to me that no proof or disproof is conclusive, and since the letter is doubted by some, I do not incorporate it, though I like it as a letter, in the text.

² I once heard of an Englishman who gave as advice to his son off to the University: 'Never drive a principle to death.' True, he added rather nervously: 'Not even that one.' I seem to see in this northern canniness, fear of extremes, distrust of 'logic,' an expression of our temperament that makes it so very hard for us to appreciate the relentless opposite of all this, in the life of an Aloysius.

about his home and his people at all, save when he prayed for them, which he did, we see, daily, or, when he had some business to transact for them, which it seems he was seldom free from altogether, and to which later on he had to devote a very great deal of time, as we shall see. I confess I cannot rid myself of the impression that Aloysius did not really like Rodolfo. He could not but see that he was a violent, sensual, ambitious and unscrupulous young man, and he certainly realized that had his father died before he set out for Rome, he would have had no option but to assume the succession. However, we have seen that he was fairly clear that the eventual prince would be Francis, and Francis in fact did not make a bad one. However, one love remained very warm in his heart—his deep devotion to his mother. The poor lady must have been very lonely now. She was deposed, and soon enough could not so much as live, in the patriarchal Italian way, in the Castiglione castle, to which Rodolfo brought a châtelaine whom she had no reason to suppose he had married, and at first, apparently, she was right. Perhaps, as she chose and packed the clothes, to her so tragically insufficient—that Aloysius took away to Rome, she had wept, thinking she would see him no more. She was destined to see him perhaps more intimately than ever: but meanwhile, on his side he had resolved that the life now taken up by him should be genuinely taken up, and there must be no brooding upon past things, and on her side, she prayed, as he trusted she would, for him; and the separation purified her own love without ever lessening it, and the last scene of all will be one of the purest joy.

The only break in the first part of his noviciate was his sojourn in the Professed House behind the Gesù. These buildings, which stand near the foot of the Capitol, were where the Jesuits of those days chiefly lived and worked and are full of treasured memories. The architecture of the church, which was built for the Society by Cardinal Alexander Farnese, is, to my mind, excellent. It is of extreme simplicity, and exactly suited to a church whither great crowds were

expected to come, and where there were to be many Masses, many confessionals, and thronged sermons. Since it served structurally as model for most Jesuit churches of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, I can only suppose that when Jesuit 'architecture' is rebuked, the adventitious element of decoration is alluded to, a perfectly different thing, belonging to a different period, not peculiar to the Jesuits, and undeniably repulsive in that it is excessive, disconnected with the organic element of the architecture, often ostentatious, and, as in the work of Pozzi, which is a generation later, often a mere trickery of perspective, suited to theatres, and such as can be seen in the other Jesuit church of Rome, St. Ignazio. This church too, built in full seventeenth century, is also architecturally admirable: but Aloysius never saw it: we need only regret that for the sake of the Gesù, which was finished the year before his arrival in Rome, the ancient church of Our Lady della Strada where St. Ignatius worshipped was pulled down in 1561, and for the sake of Sant' Ignazio, the old Annunziata where Aloysius went daily for so long, and where he was buried, was also destroyed all but a wall or two. With what love and devotion would not the faithful visit these to-day, especially had they been left unaltered in their interior appointments! With what emotion does not the visitor venerate those few old beams and door-posts, visible here and there in the room of St. Ignatius himself! As it is, save for the great masses of the buildings of the Gesù and the Roman college, we can see little if anything of what Aloysius saw with his eyes, and it is easier to tread, in the Forum, the pavements laid down whole centuries before Christ, than the floors that these Saints trod.

Aloysius stayed at the Professed house for about two months, rather longer than most novices did. His main work, during the morning, was to serve Mass—Masses were said in very great numbers there; to continue to study the sort of book that was given to such young men, and you already see how very special was his affection for St. Bernard;

to visit prisons and hospitals. One of his companions attests, as can be read in the canonization-acts, as a rule so far more vivid than Ceparì's narrative, that Aloysius in the hospital of Our Lady of Consolation, used always to picture to himself that Mary herself was putting her Son, in the guise of the sick man, into his arms for tendance. I think he did this not only to supernaturalize his intention, but, to gain courage. For he loathed the task. Once, he and his companion came to a bed whose sheets were incredibly filthied with blood and pus. Aloysius turned first white, then scarlet, and his face was distorted. His companion begged him to let him see to that case himself: he was afraid of some disaster. Aloysius surmounted himself by a violent effort, and did what he had started to do. Afterwards, Sriveri, his companion, asked him what had been the matter. Aloysius astonishingly replied that he had never been able to look at blood without fainting. He never gained perfect control, but used to snatch the fouled sheets or bandages in hospitals, instead of taking them quite quietly, or leaving them. He was resolved to conquer himself, and to do ever the harder thing; but it required an effort verging on violence.

In the autumn of 1586 Fr. Pescatore, the novice-master, fell ill, and it was decided to send him to Naples for change of air. He asked Aloysius if he would like to go with him, and Aloysius unthinkingly said 'Yes,' for he loved and revered Pescatore as a man of the deepest virtue and kindness. Afterwards, when Aloysius was told that he was indeed to go, he became anxious. Had he not outstripped the measure in his expression of personal desire? He was reassured, and with two others, a Frenchman called Pruiet, and a Scot, George Elphinstone, and Pescatore, he started from Rome on October 27th, 1586. Elphinstone was the nephew of William Elphinstone who had died in the odour of sanctity as a novice in Naples two years before, and this young man, and one other, are the only two links I can find between Aloysius and this island. Of course his family had had now and again affairs that put them in touch with England,

and there were not a few Englishmen, martyrs among them, who attended lectures at the Roman college when Aloysius was there. But there is no record that he talked to them. The other point of contact is the Father Antonio, the Portuguese priest who advised St. Stanislaus to run away.

Pescatore had to ride in a litter, with one of the three novices ; the other two rode on horseback. Pescatore insisted on having Aloysius with him : the young man resisted : he thought this was favouritism. But he was certainly the weakest of the three ; Pescatore was fond of him, and the conversation was what Aloysius liked. He learnt more, he afterwards said, in those few days of travel, than in all the months spent so far in the noviceship. This is natural. Pescatore was a man of great experience and could adapt himself more easily to Aloysius than in a noviciate full of young men who were by no means Gonzagas, and none of them an Aloysius, and where it is difficult for a novice-master to permit very long interviews to any one novice. Characteristically, Aloysius rolled up his overcoat and packed it behind him so that even in the litter, which seemed to him a luxury, he could not loll.

On the way to Naples, they must have passed Fondi, a vast Colonna castle, whence Julia Gonzaga-Bozzoli, wife of Vespasian Colonna, had almost been kidnapped by pirates when in 1534 they attacked the place. But it is not Aloysius who mentioned that.

At Naples, the Society had a professed House, and a College which served also for noviciate. Here Aloysius lived, and rather astonishingly, at first sight, was put to do metaphysics. I think this was a wise plan. In noviciates the phenomenon of 'broken heads' is not uncommon. This meant that a young man has strained too hard at his prayer and has over-concentrated, so that a sort of cerebral anæmia declares itself, showing the ordinary symptoms of neurasthenia—headaches, sleeplessness, inability to fix the thought on anything without pain, or again, difficulty in shifting the thought from some topic that obsesses the mind. I have already spoken of Aloysius's fierce concentration, which had

lasted from a time long previous to his entry, when he had no direction. In the noviciate, not only his protracted prayers had been almost wholly forbidden, but even the ordinary hour of meditation carried out by members of the Society had been halved, and again, from time to time altogether stopped. He was even forbidden to concentrate his mind on spiritual topics altogether, not a wise plan, because he had as serious a struggle to divert his mind from such things as most people have to think about them. He used to make very short visits to the Blessed Sacrament, to compensate himself, and then, since almost at once he felt himself becoming absorbed, would rise and regretfully leave the chapel. Life at Naples was for him one long headache, and he only slept easily towards morning. I think that it was obvious that he had not, at present, the physical strength for occupying himself all the day long in manual work, and none, presumably, was available for novices in those days other than the ordinary work about the house of which he always did plenty. But this you can soon quite easily do concurrently with a most vigorous mental occupation. So, since it was, too, obvious that he could never be expected to keep his brain quiet, and, as they say, 'do nothing'—and indeed, to many temperaments, nothing more exhausting can be conceived than having nothing to do—they allowed him to occupy his mind, but provided him with a different subject for his intellectual activity. They changed the string he was playing on: they sent his energy down different channels.

Unfortunately, the care they took of him was erratic. He never complained, not even when they put him in the largest dormitory, where the noise made by the others getting up made sleep, in the mornings, impossible. This was however discovered, and he was given a room to himself, but, true to the fate that just now seemed to dog him, they chose a room beneath the corridor into which all the rooms above it opened, so that the continual trampling of feet was just as bad. They let him go out in weather considered too wet for several of the others; he developed erysipelas so severely

that it kept him in bed for a month, and even then, the infirmarian had the criminal carelessness not to notice that for a whole night he had no sheets. The comments on Aloysius's serenity, during this time, are so emphatic, that I think we can be quite sure, not only that he had a very great deal to put up with, but that his calm contrasted not a little with the vivacity of the Neapolitans. There has never been any love lost between the various parts of Italy : divergences were in those days accentuated : and when you realize that Aloysius was not only not a Neapolitan, but not even a Roman, and in fact was a Lombard, I think that the atmosphere of the place was as unsympathetic to him as that, for example, of Andalusia to the very Castilian St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross. Anyhow, he got worse, and on May 8th, 1587, he was sent back to Rome.

In Rome, he went to the ' Roman College,' an institution begun in 1550, and after various vicissitudes established where its vast brick buildings now house a number of Government departments. In this grim place, Aloysius continued his studies and was considered very soon competent to defend the whole of scholastic philosophy in public, which he did. After this, he began his theology, being still technically a novice. One has to remember that Aloysius had already made considerable advance in philosophy before he arrived in Rome. But the course even for those days seems much abbreviated. He was certainly clever, had a hard intelligence, and invariably kept his head. It is possible, but not necessary, to surmise that he was being hurried on to the priesthood. However, he did his full four years of theology, having Gabriel Vasquez for one of his professors. His method was, to read but little—St. Thomas was always in his hands, and he loved the lucidity and orderliness of the great theologian's books : but on the whole, he regarded always as his starting-point the lectures that he heard. He listened with extreme attention, and where a point was reached where he could not understand, or differed, he either mentioned it, after the others had spoken, at the end of a lecture, or, collected a number of

such difficulties, and went with them to his professor's room. One of these professors, with a certain naïveness, remarked that Aloysius was the only one among all his scholars who had ever made him reflect on his own answers. I imagine that Aloysius had had so much of Formula in his life, that he could not bear what seemed to him a merely official solution to a difficulty. In the 'disputes' which are customary in such schools, it was observed that he always got to the point of a difficulty in two syllogisms only, instead of wandering round the point or complicating the question, as the uncertain touch of so many, not to mention the desire to hear themselves talk, so often does. It was also noticed that he always gave his adversary plenty of time to reflect on what he had just said, never hustled him, never interrupted him, never lost his temper. Always, before and after the schools, he visited the Blessed Sacrament in the church that was hard by the Roman College. This was the little Church of the Annunziata, and there, in but a few years, he was to be buried. I think that not only the quietness you always saw in him as he went to and from the lectures, but all the comments made upon his behaviour there, have to be thought of as against, as it were, a background of very excitable Italian students. There is always the danger, when we read Saints' lives, of thinking of them all as English, and modern Englishmen too. But anyone who has heard, even to-day, an Italian or a Spanish disputation, understands how remarkable must have been a young man who not only took a real interest in the subjects under discussion, but preserved perfect self-control throughout! Even to-day, theological passions run high, especially among Latins; and terrific crises occur in circumstances that would awake but the mildest interest in northerners. We keep having to remind ourselves that what to us would seem normal and be taken for granted, might elsewhere seem quite sensational, and vice versa! One curious little detail, however, has been noted. The professors, especially Fr. Vasquez, apparently lectured very fast, and in days when there were no textbooks to be followed or derided,

everything depended on your missing nothing that the lecturer said, and getting it all down accurately. Aloysius could not possibly keep up. To try to do so, made his head ache. Therefore Rodolfo used to send him money to pay a professional scribe, who could keep pace with the speaker, and take his notes for him. Aloysius never quite liked this : he used to tell the scribe to apply for the money to the Procurator : and once when Vasquez had overshot the mark and could not finish his treatise on the Trinity during term-time, and lent his own manuscript to be circulated and copied, Aloysius carefully went through it and marked those parts only which he wished the scribe to write out for him, lest needless expense should be incurred. Later on, he managed to rid himself of the scribe altogether : he sat back and listened carefully to what was said, and as he had an astounding memory he noted down afterwards what was needed, supplementing this from his companions' notes, which he borrowed. On his side, he lent his notes freely, never asking for them back, but waiting, with high optimism, till they should be returned. He kept the minimum of books about him : books that he could not consult in the library, he took, but returned them quickly, a greater virtue than might be at first supposed. Even his copy of the Summa he renounced in favour of a Summa-less new arrival, saying he could consult that of the companion whose room he shared ; and in the end, he had no book of his own, except the Bible.

At last, on November 25th, 1587, he took the simple vows proper to one who has finished the two years of noviciate ; and on February 25th, 1588, was tonsured in St. John Lateran, and received the other minor orders within a month.

Thus this noviciate, which in modern times, so much more systematic, would seem agitated enough, came to an end. Aloysius had now taken vows within the Society of Jesus. It should be possible to pause and take stock of his position. Possible, yes : but very difficult. For the older sorts of 'Saints'-Lives' had the habit of grouping witnesses under the heads of Virtues rather than chronologically, so that not

only are there innumerable repetitions—for one incident may illustrate humility, and mortification, and obedience, and love of one's neighbour, and recur under all these headings, but, it becomes thus very difficult to watch growth and development, which is what chiefly interests and encourages and enlightens us. It is hard to feel sure, for example, at what period in Aloysius's stay in Rome this or that occurred.

Certain things, however, are throughout consistent. One was, that Aloysius found, somewhat to his surprise and often to his indignation, that although he had succeeded in abdicating his principedom, he had not been able to cease to be Gonzaga. People would not let him forget it. Not only they stared at him wherever he went, but they substituted for the flattery proper to a prince, the flattery proper to one who had abandoned principedom. They were even cruder: the Pope's own doctor, Giovanni Zecco, was sent to attend to him, and could not feel his pulse without exclaiming upon the privilege, and hymning the Gonzaga blood that throbbed beneath his fingers. Aloysius put up with it in silence for a while: then he said curtly: 'I am a religious: I am not what I was.' At Naples, someone heard that Scipio Gonzaga had been made a cardinal, and that yet another scarlet hat now flared among the trophies of the House. Eager to be first in the field with the news, he hastened to tell Aloysius. Aloysius was at a lecture: the informant waited outside, and a small crowd to whom he confided the event collected to see how Aloysius would take it. When he came out, and was told, he reddened, bowed politely, and passed on without saying anything. The discreet snub was turned into yet more material for praising him. When he 'defended' Philosophy in public, at least three Cardinals, one of them a Gonzaga, announced they wanted to be present. This meant not only themselves, but their retinues, and a string of golden coaches outside the Roman College. The spectacle would be quite unusual: it would be due, he well saw, not to the desire of Eminence to encourage the study of philosophy in the College, or in general, but to the fact that he, poor boy, was he.

Aloysius did all he could to prevent the Cardinals coming : not only they came, but one of the disputants prefaced his syllogisms with a panegyric of Gonzagadom. Aloysius turned red with annoyance, and 'gave all his answers to that disputant,' we read, as though he were angry with him. Even the Cardinals smiled, and were edified.

It is then clear that Aloysius had still to put himself cross-ways to one element in his life. He simply could not persuade people that he really had left one whole kind of existence with all that it implied, behind him. A novice nowadays, even ducal, would take the small jobs about the house, that novices do, for granted, or would have to conquer, if anything, his inclination to regard them as a joke. A few would be distasteful to fastidious natures, I dare say, like cleaning greasy dishes or perhaps peeling onions. And shabby clothes can certainly make a young man feel awkward if he goes out in them. Shabbiness can be worse than rags, to not a few ! But Aloysius's environment had been not respectable merely, nor smart—he had not been just 'well-groomed' ; it had been magnificent : it had stood symbol to the world of supreme position, of all but unshared caste. Therefore you understand him positively and with deliberate conscious intention seeking the opposite to all that. For him, to sweep corridors, knock down spiders' webs, clean oily lamps, wear a very bad cassock, beg in the streets for the poor, were substantial things. As such, they may not have cost him much, but they stood for a very great deal : they were a kind of attack ; they were a real manifesto which was in no sort of imaginable way 'showing off,' though when a modern Englishman reads of his choosing to do this sort of thing just when important persons were about, he feels at first, instinctively, that they were surely ostentatious. As a matter of fact, witnesses are very emphatic on his total lack of affectation in all this, and the extraordinary naturalness and skilfulness, with which he did what he did. Still, though in his inmost soul he was thinking of Christ, and meaning that all this should be his gesture of the moment whereby he showed

his will-to-serve, it was, too, and still had to be, and all his life in a certain measure had to be, real self-defence, a real resolute assertion that he had always meant what he said, and meant it now.

Another element that seems to have been almost continuous in his life rather surprises us. At present noviciates are on the whole much more absorbed within themselves than then they were. True, St. Ignatius contemplates his novices absenting themselves on a month's pilgrimage, making their way as best they could. Now in those days of very bad roads, appalling inns, brigands who might indeed not attack young ecclesiastical students because they obviously had nothing worth taking, but who were quite capable of seizing them and holding them to ransom if it seemed likely to prove worth while, and, what was worst, a very corrupt clergy, such a pilgrimage might have been sensational and perilous in the extreme, and threw the young men back on to their own resources and demanded of them extreme reliability of character and very tough nerves and certainly no prudishness: nothing to-day can quite be substituted for this. Also St. Ignatius desired that novices should serve for a month in hospitals, and teach Christian doctrine to the poor. To-day the apparition of a novice in a hospital, proposing to tend the sick, might not meet much welcome, even though, now and again, something of the sort might be arranged. But even in the somewhat improved conditions of Aloysius's time—and the improvement consisted in an increase in the number of hospitals rather than in their management—to serve in a hospital was regarded as heroic and too often demanded heroism. I have sufficiently suggested above that of Aloysius heroism was certainly demanded. But all the way through you find him so constantly asking permission to go to the hospitals, that it was one of the things he was criticized for. 'I rebuked him sharply,' says one witness, 'for so importunately begging and in fact urging Superiors to allow him (to go there): I said he was allowing himself to be carried away by his fervour much too far: that he would have to

account for it before God his judge, and that he would be tormented by the thought of it when he came to die.' This was certainly pretty strong. 'But,' continues this witness, 'though he might well have been offended by my boorish way of talking, far from showing any sign of annoyance, he said, with his usual calm expression and interiorly quite at peace: 'Dear Father: I haven't any reason for being anxious or fearing I may become so. I do nothing without the knowledge and permission of my Superior, and how can I help telling him the desires that God is good enough to put into my head, and ask leave to do what I feel His mercy is pressing me to do?' And indeed he regularly obtained full leave, and was constantly in and out of hospitals, even at Naples, and also, prisons, and everyone knows what filthy places these then were, and what haunts of obscenity and blasphemy. If Aloysius took the utmost care of his own mind, and eyes, we shall never forget that it was an absolutely fearless care and the notion of being 'shocked' was alien to him—perhaps it must needs have been to anyone of that age: doubly alien was it to the young man who from childhood had lived in camps, barracks, and courts, and had now exchanged the refined iniquity of the courts at any rate, for the unspeakable grossness of prisons and the reeking misery of hospitals.

His conception of 'teaching Christian doctrine' was also a remarkable one. It is true that he asked leave to try to teach it to a class of very small children at the College, who were collected there from time to time: it is curious to be told that he hated this. 'It was by nature repulsive to him.' Why? At Castiglione children flocked round him. For one thing, he was then much younger. By now I think he had found he got on much better with grown men or lads. Also, I expect that Roman ragamuffins were very different from Lombard children; moreover, in his own town, they all of them knew him for their Lord. But in the City itself, things were very different. He used to get on to the little stages in the markets where jacks-of-all-trades and quack doctors used to hold forth: in no time, the place was thronged to listen

to him : Cardinals stopped their carriages to see what he was saying : he used to march back to the college, or a church, at the head of a whole troop of men persuaded to go to confession, and nobody else collected so many or managed them so well, and they were not only country-folks come in to Rome for marketing, but the scum of the City itself.

Within the house, he had all the little courtesies that make such a difference in a community. When men were ill, he used to visit them every day, if he thought they would like it; and that he made closer friends with some than with others, gradually becomes quite clear. And he never forgot the Brothers who have all the hard work of religious life without any of the consolations that the priesthood, or even the prospect of it, brings. He used to be with them whenever he could, and also, with new-comers. One last touch—when he prepared the food which he meant to take to hospitals or the poor, he was noted for doing it with ‘extraordinary cleanliness.’

I think then that there is considerable material for estimating the actual occupations of these years which were, after all, years of preparation, and contained a rigorous course of study—for no one is likely to suppose that Fr. Vasquez let his men off easily. To me, the marvel is that Aloysius, who was really ill half the time—and nothing is more exhausting than insomnia—and whose life was one long headache, could have done nearly so much exterior work as he did.

As for his personal exterior life, I do not think I need add much. His principles were, to do the thing so thoroughly as he possibly could. Therefore, since he had his vow of poverty, he would be as poor as he could. He was to be obedient, so he was obedient to the least regulation of the house. He had always guarded his eyes, and practised that intense concentration that made him keep his head somewhat bent forward. They did not like this, in the noviciate, and stiffened the collar of his cassock with cardboard : even this, I think, could not produce much effect : he did not help the muscles to alter themselves, and when his body, long later, was exhumed,

the skull was seen still to be dropped forward slightly from the neck. In consequence of this 'custody of the eyes,' and still more, of this inward thought, he did not notice many a detail that others did; and even in the world it had been said, by a nobleman, that the only fault he could find with Aloysius was, that he did not notice nor bow to those whom he should have saluted. So now, though as a rule his courtesy was extreme and anticipated that of others, he sometimes passed people by without acknowledging their salute. He took time to learn the arrangement of tables in the great refectory: he did not notice, once, that the country-place they had been to for their weekly day of holiday, was different from last week's. When praying, he would not waste time in considering the decoration of the altar.

As for his own interior life, I think that we can see that all this first part of his stay within the Society, he was largely occupied in making sure of his motives. Even a Saint finds it hard, now and again, to be quite sure why he is doing a thing. It is unlikely that such an one will be completely deluded as to his motive, let alone do something with a consciously wrong motive; but the anguish of life is, that a good man finds he is doing things with mixed motives. That at least one fibre in the web of will is a discoloured one. That an element of conceit or self-pleasing enters into the doing of an action certainly good, and almost wholly disinterested. St. Bernard had to tell the devil that the sermons he preached, and which he could not but consider good and applaud within himself, had not been begun for *him*, and should not be stopped for him. You can see that the noviciate was a time when the roots of his actions were indeed pitilessly searched, if only because he was forbidden so much that he had hitherto done. You can end by loving your own austerities: by adhering to them for their own sake. When he really disliked having a new cassock, he was warned by his superiors that this itself could quite well proceed from self-love. He knew by experience that he could think of God when he pleased: he could have done so when rebuked: when publicly

snubbed, for example, in the refectory for mistakes in serving or in reading. He owned he did not like these public snubs. But he never allowed himself so to concentrate on God, that he would not hear them. Obedience, I suppose, had never been his characteristic virtue: now, to make sure he really did obey, he tried to see whether he obeyed a subordinate official as truly as a superior one. He found he did so, but even so was anxious. Humanly speaking, he said, it would be hard to obey anyone, especially of course if it were an inferior in rank, or in knowledge—it would be cowardice—and this itself is illuminative: it shows where Aloysius was sensitive: as he knew himself a prince, so he knew himself outstandingly intelligent—but, he continued, if you are obeying God, you may derive a sort of perverted satisfaction from thinking that you recognize and obey His word in a mean and disproportionate representative. Once he was puzzled: he had been ordered by Piatti to attend not only the first but the second ‘recreation’ after meals. The priest thought he needed more talk, to distract his mind. Another superior, seeing him at second recreation, gave him a penance for not going to his room at the proper time. Aloysius did the penance, without excusing himself, and returned, next day, to second recreation as before. The priest saw him there again, was surprised, but again gave him the penance, which was a public self-accusation in the refectory. Piatti told him that this had given scandal: no one should do penance twice for the same fault: why had he not explained to the Father Minister that he not only had leave but an order to go to the two recreations? Aloysius confessed that he had not felt sure he could do so without some selfish wish to defend and exonerate himself. But he had resolved, if the thing happened a third time, to explain to the Minister. You may see in this a lack of simplicity, and I think that later on—it happened quite at the beginning—he would not have done it. But one sees the point: it was the possibility that the hidden roots of action might be tainted, that alarmed him. Even, he was at first distressed not to feel sure whether his desire to pray, his intense hope

that he would be soon allowed to make the full hour of morning meditation, was quite free from selfishness—he had had it suggested to him that what the Master of Novices had refused to him, might be allowed by the General if he asked him. He subdued the inclination to go over the head, thus, of his immediate superior and get the prohibition prohibited. He ended, as Bellarmine, his confessor, witnessed, by knowing exactly the origin and nature, so to say, of his very thoughts, and how far they had gone, and to what extent they had been automatic. Even remorse, he saw quite well, can contain some element of self-ignorance, and self-esteem. You are piqued at catching yourself out in a fault you did not think you were capable of. When he considered himself to have done wrong, he said with simplicity: ‘See, Lord, the fruits of my garden,’ was sorry, and left it there. His confessions accordingly were, said Bellarmine, ‘short, clear, and without scruples.’ I think that it was quite early, and only in passing, that he did collect one scruple: he honestly could not see, when examining his conscience, that he had to accuse himself even of a venial sin. This must have referred to a short stretch of life, for as a rule he saw his faults and was quietly sorry for them, and not surprised, and ‘worried’ no more about them than about anything else. ‘When he saw,’ someone said, ‘that anything lay outside his control, he disregarded it.’ He never tried for the impossible.

This clear-sightedness is, in reality, humility, if humility be the seeing of things in proportion, including yourself. Pius XI says somewhere that Aloysius had a true estimate of his own gifts, nor is there any virtue in not knowing that you possess such or such an one. There may be a certain charm in seeing that a man does not realize how outstanding his talents are: but I think that really great men, just because they are great and see all things greatly, do not contrast their talents with the talents of those who have less, but with the ideal which they see so much more clearly than most men see it. So they do not feel that they are anything remarkable. It would appear to them ludicrous to esteem themselves for

being a little more than their fellow-man, when they see themselves to be so far far less than the 'many-splendoured thing,' the Reality which, as they see it, and themselves, even one degree more truly, seems to them ever further off. To the Christian, only the thought of the Indwelling of God, and of the 'homeliness' of Christ, can make this vision other than most bitter.

Hence not only Aloysius had but little temptation to rely on his assets or his actions, but he very carefully guarded the clear vision he possessed. Continually attacked by people who wanted to reduce him to the level of those who were taken in by the illusion of riches and rank, quite properly he acted positively against this, and made it brutally clear to all who chose to attend to him, that he did not want wealth, nor rank, nor power. Anything, therefore, that 'put' or 'kept' him in his place, he welcomed: this is the meaning of 'loving humiliations.' And it may not be mere chance that one of the longer fragments of his notes that survives, concerns itself with humility. It is striking how positive in its approach to humility this fragment is. It begins, as he always at once began, not with himself, but with God, for whom man is created, and to whom he is obliged to tend, not only by his creation, but because of his redemption, and by vocation. Hence a man should always abstain not only from sin, which definitely separates him from God, but from what is neutral or useless, for such things simply bear no relation to God's purpose for man: on the contrary, we should try, exteriorly and interiorly, to 'draw nearer to God.' (I may say here that this was what accounted for his loathing for pointless talk.) He was on the whole skilful in his talk, and succeeded in 'interesting,' as we should say, his companions in what alone enthralled himself. Even, he gained permission from his superiors, who would be very circumspect in any such matter, to leave even general topics, such as literature or the events of the day, to one side at recreation, and talk only of spiritual things. He used to go with men who, he felt, would find this palatable: had there been the least symptom of

this creating pietistic or self-complacent cliques, we may be perfectly sure it would soon have been prohibited! As it was, a quite extraordinary spirit prevailed in the young Jesuits of that period. Even on holidays, when they went to Frascati, they came to like the conversation that Aloysius liked. His ascendancy must have been amazing, though I think that it was not gained by any means at once. He continued by what may relieve an anxiety we may have felt, on seeing Aloysius so much preoccupied with the almost stern notion of God, and of the virtues that should exist in the soul He made and calls. For this does not seem peculiarly Christian, but almost what a theist might aim at. He continues then by recalling that his vocation simply obliges him to set before himself the standard of Christ, and of the Saints His followers. Hence one should study and gain a most intimate acquaintance with the sheer story of Our Lord, and again, the stories of the Saints. Thus, he concludes, the very affections become harmonized with God, you love what is eternal, and hate those things alone that are enduringly evil. But this demands effort : and so, ' since the devil attacks you,' he says to himself, ' continually on the side of vanity and self-esteem,' all the more must you resist this outside and within. Christ Himself has set an example herein, because though humility is very well suited to men because of their intrinsically lowly state, it is a virtue which, quite simply, ' does not grow in our garden.' Ask it then from ' the Infinite Majesty of God, its first and principal author,' and then through the profound humility of Jesus Christ, ' who emptied Himself, taking the nature of a servant,' though He was very God. One should then, he adds, ask the prayers of the Saints, who certainly possessed this virtue upon earth, and will be ready, in Heaven, to obtain it for others. With his habit of using what experience had supplied to him, and never drawing, so far as you can see, upon his imagination, he recalls that at Court, if you want a favour, you ask it through some prominent person whose calling suits him to be your patron. Advancement in the army, you ask through a General.

Very well, ask humility from Mary: from Peter, who cried out: 'Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man': from Paul, who despite his ecstasies, yet wrote of Christ, that he 'came into this world to save sinners of whom I am the chief.' He recurs to this notion in another paper, making the same comparison between the Saints and court officials, but prefixing the really sublime consideration that we must offer these our desires to God, not as they are in ourselves, but as they are in Christ: for since they are good, they must be in Him, before, and better than, they are in us, so that He will express them to His Father as never we can ourselves. Perhaps there is the very best sort of humility to be got, by thinking of ourselves, not as they exist at present in caricature, so to say, but as they are, in eternity, and in exquisite loveliness in the Mind of God—God's eternal idea of us: for thus we cannot by dint of humility take mean views of self or of anything else, for in God's mind there is nothing mean, but all is magnificent: yet we shall not for one moment be inclined to think that we are anything like that now; and so we shall long for Purgatory, and for the ever-transforming work of Grace within us, and we shall earnestly desire closer incorporation with Our Lord, in whom the source of our new manhood springs.

As a matter of fact, Aloysius had a quite special reason for ordering himself humbly and submissively before God, consisting in the frightful state of society, to which I have already alluded. In the notes quoted above, he deliberately writes down: 'The greater number of religious and of ecclesiastics forget their vocation—how will God continue to bear so great a loss to His kingdom? The faithful all their lives by their lukewarmness deprive God of His glory: who shall restore it? Alas for seculars, who defer penance until death is near. Alas, too, for Religious, who sleep till the last hour!' This was his experience, and, as I said, the stern measures taken by Pope or Prince do not, in a generation, alter hearts. The exterior order of Rome, such as it was, did not imply the regeneration of men's minds. But there was

no hint of pharisaic condemnation in this cry of his. 'The pillars of heaven have fallen, and been broken in pieces,' he wrote, but at once continued: 'Who can promise me perseverance?' 'The world is now in the depth of malice: who shall appease the anger of God all-powerful?' He scarcely dared to write: 'I will': but he added that these thoughts would help him to get rid of sloth, to do penance to grieve not only for the mortal sins (that never had been his) but for that dust of venial sin that settles on the purest soul. So far, he concluded, does such a sorrow go, that it makes one want to be punished—punished by God; and the exterior penance that we rightly use excites and strengthens this desire that God should chastise us. To so terrible a Purgatory was he vowing himself already on his earth. Perhaps he earned it, and accomplished it. Others thought that he did so. They held that his soul could pass without fleck or flaw, from his tired body into God's Paradise.

It is somehow in connection with this that I see his devotion to the Angels. His mother used to call her little boy her 'angel,' and that is not unnatural: later on, it became a sort of nickname for him, and finally all but an official title and has many an echo in the Liturgy.¹ The word 'angel' conveyed, I think, that of spirituality in the sense that an angel is pure *mind*. It acts wholly by reason, not by passion. Still less, by fleshly passion. Such did Aloysius appear to men to be. Is this attractive? Certainly not to the sentimental, which northerners mostly are, and still are despite the pose of

¹ Its influence has been unfortunate in one direction. When the Victorian, or rather, the German art-type of angel came in—an oval-faced being, very sexless, and insipid, there came in with it a new type of Aloysius, that, alas, to which we are all too accustomed.

The Renaissance angel was an exuberant, highly-coloured creature, kicking and curveting among clouds. In that period, the anæmic Aloysius was not invented. His early pictures are not attractive, it is true: but they are harsh, rather than mild: angular, rather than drooping: there is a real attempt at portraiture, and though they are rather dismal, they suggest his spirit of penance at any rate, albeit their gesticulation is Latin and of the period and unlike, I imagine, the very 'controlled' Aloysius, and not really expressive of his intensity of spirit, which required no external mannerisms in order to transmit itself.

unfeelingness which is common nowadays, and is able quite easily to turn, genuinely, into insensitivity, one of the pagan vices that St. Paul most sternly condemns. Nor is it attractive to those who, without being actually sentimental, yet like people to be spontaneous and, as they say, 'natural.' After all, we *are* not angels, but men, and shall never be anything else, and need not and should not try to be. But I hope to say a word about the 'passionlessness' of Aloysius below. Here I will only add that he did indeed like to think and talk about the angels, and wrote a meditation on them. It is interesting to see how the Angels at once remind him of his favourite qualities, just as a sermon on All Saints seemed merely to provide him with an occasion for speaking about poverty. (Since this sermon is little more than a string of quotations from the fathers and saints, about poverty, and since in it there is nothing characteristically Aloysian, I do not quote, though it certainly shows how widely he had read or at least how sedulously he had hunted up passages authorising his affection for that virtue.) The first section of the first 'consideration' occupies itself entirely with the thought of the humility of the Angels, who serve mankind, so much inferior by nature to themselves, and who do so, because they contemplate Him whom both men and angels must serve, the Eternal Son of God, who by becoming man, put Himself lower than the angels. 'It would be monstrous,' writes Aloysius, with a flash of feeling, 'if we, His members, were to wish to enter (our glory) by any door other than that by which our Head did enter.' He then reflects that the Court, or Army, of an earthly Prince, is honourable by reason of the nobility, the number, and the due order of and among its courtiers, and he works this out applying it to the angels, revealing not a little of his own mind when he exults in the entire absence of confusion in the celestial ranks, and also the limits of his imagination, when he compares some of the heavenly spirits to the private secretaries of the Divine Majesty! I quote no more of this here, as the meditation is translated in an appendix: I will say frankly that I like it,

not in spite of, but partly because of, its quaint stateliness and precision : there seems to be in it a true force of contemplation, and an intensity almost overwhelming, and all this, apart from the consideration that it was written by a Saint, and such a Saint, so that we have both the right and the duty of reading into it, all that we know of him.¹

¹ The room in which Aloysius slept at Naples was made into a chapel, but when the Jesuits were expelled in 1767 its very position, apparently, was forgotten. However, in 1876, a violent rain-storm half ruined the buildings, and the chapel was discovered and re-opened to the faithful in 1877.

CHAPTER II

THE TESTED STEEL

The energy of the saints has left everywhere its dents upon the world. When these men, reviled for impotence, have turned their half-disdainful hand to tasks approved by the multitude, they have borne away the palm from the world in its own prized exercises.

Francis Thompson : *Health and Holiness.*

MEANWHILE domestic troubles of various sorts were brewing for Aloysius. To begin with, Rodolfo had carried off a certain Elena Aliprandi, the daughter of the Master of his mint, and had established her to all appearances as his mistress in one of his houses. It had been intended that Rodolfo should marry a daughter of Prince Alfonso Gonzaga, Lord of Castel Goffredo, and his uncle, for, that nobleman having no sons, Rodolfo would anyhow inherit his fief, and if he married Alfonso's daughter, his first cousin, she would at least remain as lady paramount in the domain where she had been brought up. Therefore the association of Rodolfo with Elena Aliprandi was interfering not a little with the family plans. Moreover Rodolfo had quarrelled with the Duke of Mantua over another fief, Solferino, which his uncle Horace, dying without children, had left by will to Duke William, whereas Rodolfo, alleging that it was an imperial fief, maintained that it could not be left by will, but was bound to come to him. Already in 1588 the Marchioness Dowager had written to Aloysius about these two points. At first there were hopes that an agreement could be come to between the Duke and the Marquis, even when Duke William died in 1587 and was succeeded by his young son Vincent who meant to carry on his father's plan of settling the dispute by law rather than by arms. However I revert to this below. As for the affair of Elena Aliprandi, Aloysius thought that the best plan was to marry off Rodolfo to someone, at any rate, as soon as possible. In June 1588

he wrote to his mother ; who perhaps showed signs of giving up Rodolfo as hopeless :

Most Illustrious Lady and Most Respected Mother in Christ,

I learned from your last letter the good desire of my brother to come to accord with the Lord Duke of Mantua, and I pray you not to cease co-operating herein. As for the rest of what you said, I think that the most suitable method is what Christ our Lord himself instituted upon earth, namely marriage, and I think it would be good that you should urge it on my brother, and if you think it necessary, on Monsignor Cardinal della Rovere ; and I will also urge it on him, because we both think it would be a good thing. I have not any particular person in view, save the daughter of Count Troilo di San Secondo, whom there is question of giving to a brother of a Cardinal of the Court here, a great friend of Monsignor della Rovere. Since the negotiations have already begun, especially with a man who is a friend of the said Lord Cardinal, I do not think we had better interfere with them till we see what happens : for His Most Illustrious Lordship told me that he did not think they would come to anything owing to the lady herself, who, being from the north, is most unwilling to marry down here. Things being in this position seem to augur well for the Marquis my brother. Your Ladyship will be able to get better information about this in the north and supposing you find that the match would be agreeable to the Lord Duke of Mantua, I think it is the best plan because it would be good to kill two birds with one stone. You and my uncle Lord Alfonso, if he judges it expedient, could work hard for the match in the north.¹ For my part, with what little power I have, I will not omit to recommend it to His Divine Majesty, from Whom chiefly

¹ This suggests either that Aloysius had not heard of the possible marriage between Rodolfo and whichever of Alfonso's seven daughters had been intended for him—and this is most improbable—or, that Rodolfo had already made it quite clear he did not intend to marry any one of them, which indeed he might well have done, since he was already secretly married to Elena, which nobody knew.

we have to hope a happy result. Over and above this, if it is necessary that My Lords Cardinal Gonzaga and della Rovere, our kinsmen, should do so, they will not omit to further it and to help in any way that may be useful. I write no more now but recommend myself to you in the Lord and beg you to salute for me Lady Ippolita [his uncle Alfonso's wife], the Marquis my brother, etc. From Rome, June 20, 1588.

To find Aloysius involved at all in such affairs, may be rather a shock. His extreme objectivity of outlook, and hard-headed realism, may be so too. However, I know no document more suited to explain to us not only the world of his day, and how thoroughly his *natural* ideas were those of his time, but, perhaps, the whole Latin outlook, to which such negotiations would not have seemed in the least surprising. And indeed, the marriages of important persons to-day are often arranged with even less consideration for the feelings of those concerned.

The affair however of Solferino promised to be more difficult, and even, fraught with peril for that much distracted town, whose woes only ceased after the famous battle in 1859. Its solitary tower bears an inscription stating that it was built in 1016. Its violent history obtained some stability when the Gonzagas in 1366 received investiture and held the place for some centuries. Lodovico Gonzaga left it by will to his fourth son Rodolfo in 1478. In 1511 his sons divided his lands among themselves and Solferino fell to Aloysius Alexander, St. Aloysius's grandfather. On his death a new division was made, and Solferino was assigned to his son Horace, who, dying in 1578, left the territory to the Duke of Mantua. Hence the feud, for Rodolfo claimed that the fief could not be left by will at all, and that he was bound to inherit it. Far from me to profess an opinion as to the justice of this argument. Anyhow, the moment Rodolfo had heard of the death of his uncle—he was told while he was in church—he caused drums to be beaten, and at the head of 600 retainers marched to Solferino and took possession of the castle. The Duke of

Mantua, extremely annoyed, put a force into the field and marched to oppose him. 'Afterwards,' says the chronicle discreetly, the Duke and the Marquis decided that they had better settle the affair by law, and appealed to the Emperor to arbitrate. Instantly, Donna Marta betook herself to Prague, along with her three youngest sons, and Francis, then aged nine, was caused to recite a long speech to the Emperor, which so enchanted him that he resolved to keep Francis there as page, which was why he never saw Aloysius again. I conclude that it was when Aloysius heard of his mother's departure for Prague that he wrote her the following letter :

The peace of Christ. Some days ago I had a letter from you telling me of the answer of the Lord Duke of Mantua about the castle of Solferino : to you it gave occasion for showing a mother's love and charity, and on me it lays the obligation of praying to His Divine Majesty that He may bring this business to the end that He knows to be best, and meanwhile may He accompany Your Illustrious Ladyship in all these labours, in which moreover you have for guide Madonna Santissima. To-day being the day of the Holy Innocents, when she fled to Egypt, I do not think that you need more consolation than to marvel at such a guide, since for this end our blessed God and His most holy Mother willed to pass through the bitter waters of tribulation, that being tasted by them as bitter, they might be made sweet for ourselves. I, by God's goodness, am very well, and now that owing to the Nativity of our Lord, the time of fullness of prayers is come, I remind myself more than ever to pray for you. So too I beg Your Ladyship to do for me, for I need prayers so much : by the grace of the Lord, I lack nothing else, and to Him in conclusion I commend you. Rome, Dec. 29, 1588.

The Emperor proceeded to send a commissary to Solferino, to take possession of it in his own name till the cause should be decided. Vincent of Mantua had no Francis to make speeches for him, and the Emperor at last ruled that the fief should go

to Rodolfo. Meanwhile Aloysius felt that his mother was having none too happy a time, and wrote to her on March 9th from Rome :

The Peace of Christ ! Before I received Your Ladyship's last letter in which you asked me to solicit for you from Monsignor Cardinal della Rovere the permission you wanted to enter convents of nuns, His Most Illustrious Lordship had already spoken to me on the subject, and said that before hearing from Your Ladyship he had already been requested for the same permission by another lady, and had been refused by His Holiness. However, since you received permission from Gregory XIII to enter the convent of Our Lady, he would venture to make this further request from His Holiness, laying the previous permit before him. After I received Your Ladyship's letter I again spoke with the Secretary of the Lord Cardinal, to whom it seemed necessary that Your Ladyship should send that permit, so that the Most Illustrious Cardinal might lay the matter anew before His Holiness. I think it will be necessary for you to do this. Meanwhile if anything can be done and if I get the chance, I will not fail to mention it again to the Cardinal. As for the rest, by the grace of God I am not very well so far as my head goes, but otherwise very well indeed. I wish the same to Your Ladyship : and since among all the consolations of this life none are greater nor more effective than those from His Divine Majesty, I think that it is these that must comfort you, remembering what the Lord so often repeats in the Holy Scriptures, especially in the psalm *Exurgat Deus*, that He is the protector of orphans and the judge of widows. I also wrote to Lord Alfonso who will not, I hope, fail to comfort you. I still have not received an answer from my brother to three letters that I wrote to him, asking him to send me 40 scudi at the beginning of this year for my theological notes. I have to have the money, because the superiors of our Society do not let me write in school with my own hand because of my headaches. For the rest I commend myself humbly to

Your Most Illustrious Ladyship, for whom in conclusion I pray every fullness of graces, and I pray you to salute in my name my brothers who are with you, and Dr. Salustio. Rome ; March 9, 1589.

But the matter had not merely dragged its slow length along : by now, the flatterers and the enemies of the two Gonzagas, intriguers whom Ceparì discreetly and comprehensively describes as 'Satan,' had so inflamed the situation, that there was not the least chance of the Emperor's being obeyed. Very likely his own officials were desirous that the commissary should become a fixture at Solferino. But as the months passed, the question of Solferino, says Ceparì, became the least of the quarrels of the two young princes. Possevin, in his *Gonzaga*, has much concerning this, but he is so definitely imitating Tacitus that the Bollandists themselves do not seem to attach much importance to his details. The upshot was that the sublimest personages were seeing their efforts at reconciliation defeated, including the Archduke Ferdinand, brother to the Emperor ; great princes were being drawn to this side or that ; war, or at least a new series of murders, could be foreseen. Suddenly it occurred to Eleanor of Austria, the Duke's mother, that there was one man whose arbitration all, surely, would accept—Aloysius Gonzaga, who had gone away to Rome. She approached Donna Marta, and without a word to Vincent or Rodolfo, they wrote to him begging him to come. Aloysius, intensely reluctant to leave Rome and to mix himself up with such a quarrel, consulted Bellarmine. Bellarmine thought that he ought to go. Meanwhile the Archduchess had written to the General himself, and he agreed with Bellarmine, whom he sent to the country house at Frascati, where Aloysius was, to tell him so. He sighed, and put his things together, which took him a quarter of an hour only, refusing, I may add, an umbrella which, since he had only just been unwell and in the infirmary, they tried to insist on his taking. He also went to the room of his very special friend Antonio Guelfucci and gave him a Lucca crucifix (representing I presume, the Volto Santo venerated in that town. Our Lord

is on the Cross clothed and crowned). 'This,' said Aloysius, 'is what I have always kept my eyes upon, and my hopes, and my love.' They all then went with him as far as a vineyard belonging to the house at Frascati, and returned in great grief at losing him. Bellarmine talked about him all the way back, and said he thought he was 'confirmed in grace,' and that Thomas Aquinas must have been like that when he was young.

In Rome he went first to see the General, and then to say good-bye to the Cardinals his kinsmen. At Cardinal della Rovere's, he fainted, and they put him to rest, says the awe-struck chronicler, on the Cardinal's own bed. The Cardinal sat beside him and told him he really ought to take more care of himself. Aloysius said he took too much. . . .

Next morning, he completed his equipment, and when they offered him a pair of boots, someone was fool enough to say that they had been made for such and such a nobleman. Naturally Aloysius at once took a dislike to them: he invented excuses for not taking them. 'What is the matter with them?' they asked, but he would not answer. They removed them, and then, since they were apparently high and flexible, rearranged their shape and brought them back. 'These might do,' they said, and he agreed that they would serve. You can already foresee the intense discomfort that he was to endure, when he should find himself plunged once more into the life of palaces.

There is not much to be said about this journey, save that Aloysius made the greatest friends with the coachmen, tough creatures, it would appear, even then, for the fact called forth a special comment of his biographer. He had with him a Father Bernardino Medici, on his way to teach Scripture at Milan, and a Brother, Giacomo Borlasco, who was to look after his health. At Siena, the Jesuit community and one father in particular fussed over their important guest. Aloysius was annoyed, and refused to have his feet washed by anyone there—this custom still subsisting at that time in the houses of the Society. At Florence, he left Medici behind to see his relatives,

and went on to Bologna, where they again swarmed around him, and then sent him out to see the sights of the city with the sacristan. As a matter of fact, he visited but one or two churches and returned. They then passed into the district of Ferrara, and halted for the night at an inn between that city and Mantua. The landlord provided them with a room having but one bed in it. The lay-brother, much upset, took the landlord aside and said that they were religious and that this arrangement would not do. The landlord said he wanted the other beds in case some gentlemen should arrive that night. The brother was very angry, but Aloysius told him to keep quiet. 'The landlord,' said the brother, very scandalized, 'says he wants his beds for gentlemen, as if *we* were peasants. You at least ought to be treated with respect.' Aloysius again told him to keep quiet. 'He treats us as poor men, and so we are. We have no reason to complain.' However, no one else came that night, so they slept in peace. Not long after that, they reached Mantua. After visiting the Archduchess, he went to the Jesuit house and thence wrote to Rodolfo.

The Peace of Christ. Here am I thanks to the grace of God our Lord, arrived at Mantua where along with my brother-companion I am being kindly put up at the College of the Fathers of the Society, and to-day I hope to present myself and disentangle and define with the help of God the business which before all I have wished to put into the hands of the same our most holy Lord. It is for Him to do what is best and I hope He will. Toward evening along with my Brother-Coadjutor and companion we shall be on our way to Castiglione, where we shall put up, and I conclude by asking you to present my respects to Her Most Excellent Ladyship our Mother, whose hands I kiss. From our College in Mantua, 1589. Your devoted servant in Christ, Aluigi Gonzaga.

It cannot be said that this letter, which apparently has no superscription, erred on the side of geniality; and I imagine

that by now Rodolfo must have been shaking in his shoes. However, he sent to fetch Aloysius, who, with the brother coadjutor and a priest who was travelling that way, arrived in the neighbourhood of Castiglione, and there asked one of the men whom he met to let his brother hear he was coming. In a moment the whole town knew, and went delirious with joy : the bells were booming, the cannon crashing : the windows and the streets were thronged. Rodolfo came to the gate of the citadel to meet him. While they embraced, a vassal flung himself on his knees before Rodolfo and begged pardon for some fault he had committed, and Rodolfo duly forgave him for Aloysius's sake. At once the castle was flung open to Aloysius and he re-entered rooms he had thought never to see again, and the old titles Excellency, Most Illustrious, echoed once more round about him. His heart sank the more, since his mother was not there. She had returned from Prague, but could not well live, after all, in the house where Elena Aliprandi had replaced her. She had her own palace in the town, but at the moment was at a place called San Martino, twelve miles away, with her two little sons—Francis was with the Emperor. Aloysius sent her a messenger, and next day she hurried to Castiglione : Aloysius hurried too to her, and the mother knelt before her boy and venerated as a Saint him whom even as a child she had called her angel. He remained with her the whole day. When the lay-brother returned in the evening, he found the mother and her son kneeling beside one another in prayer.

During this first part of his stay in Castiglione, he seems to me to have kept very steadily to the business in hand and not to have occupied himself much with the people in the city. Indeed, he was asked to preach in the parish church, but remarked rather grimly that he thought he had better begin with his own family. Moreover, he was establishing, first, the principle that he was no more heir-apparent, let alone reigning prince. I am quite sure that Aloysius never wished people to be devout merely to please him. Not that he had an easy task. Every luxury was not only ready for him, but

almost forced on him. This episode may even have been the final test—that he really abdicated, not a mere title, but a whole life? that life compact of brutality and sophistication, of mechanical frogs and murders . . .? At any rate, his behaviour now *had* to be a manifesto: people had to be forced to understand that he was no elegant ecclesiastic slipping back into the curled and scented world. He wanted to act, even when to do so seemed exaggerated, like a religious in his house. In some points he could succeed: when he went up to bed, and found a row of footmen waiting to undress him, he could bundle them from the room—he now brushed his own coat: blacked his own boots: would make his own bed, if he could steal a march upon the valets. The great Gonzaga coach, gilded and coroneted, with its black eagles spreading their wings wide upon the sides could insist on crawling behind him whenever he went out—he could refuse to enter it, and even, to have a soldier to accompany him. When winter came, he could get warmer clothes from the Jesuits at Brescia, and insist on having old ones: at his mother's table, he could ask to have his glass put ready-filled, as the custom in religious houses was, in front of him. But the Brother, a simple man, who did not quite relish even Aloysius's talk, and sometimes asked him to change the subject, could, on occasion, put his foot down. He absolutely refused to stay in the room when Aloysius and his mother were together, and Aloysius, despite the rule that says visits should not be paid unaccompanied, readily gave in. He was not allowed to stay in the presbytery, but made to live in one or the other of the Gonzaga houses. When his poor mother, perfectly desperate at the state into which her son's linen had degenerated—a tragedy only too apt to happen in a household wholly male—gave herself the delight of making him some shirts, even then the Brother had some business to insist on his accepting two. It is true that the Brother got one of them, and also a Mantuan waistcoat, since Donna Marta had procured two of these also, which Aloysius at first refused. But the Brother really could not do without his waistcoat! He went into Aloysius's room one

morning while he was dressing, and ordered him to accept a waistcoat as an alms. . . . It is certain that the accepting of presents, at least of costly presents or presents given almost as a matter of course, is a mistake for a religious, and also lends itself to any amount of misunderstanding, especially if they be taken from one and not another. And I expect Aloysius was not only acting from asceticism when he lamented to the Brother that even a little of the simple food of the colleges suited him better than the rich dishes his mother kept offering to him, with her gentle cajolery—'Brother Aloysius, take a little of this—it is so good!' It is true that much that one eats, is eaten lest the feelings of the cook be hurt: and one might wish that Aloysius had eaten just to please poor Donna Marta! Perhaps he did, now and again, and kept the consequent discomfort to himself. . . . But even with his mother, whose adoring love would never have admitted that anything he did could be anything but perfect, he had to maintain the principle, just as when he went on business to his brother, he never would take precedence, but waited his turn among the applicants for audience in the ante-chamber, to their anguished embarrassment, I have no doubt at all. . . .

The intricate affair of Solferino took him hither and thither during these months to the various people whom Rodolfo had succeeded in angering. To Brescia, to Mantua, he kept having to return, and of course to Castel Goffredo where his uncle Alfonso lived, whose heir he ought to have been.

Castel Goffredo belonged, at least in 1167, to the family of the counts of Longhi-Lomello. In 1185 they sold their fiefs between the Oglio and the Mincio to the Commune of Brescia. In 1337 the Commune made itself over to Luigi Gonzaga of Mantua, and till 1441 the unfortunate town found itself the prey successively of the Gonzagas, the Visconti, the Malatestas, and the republic of Venice. In 1441 Gianfrancesco Gonzaga was able to bequeath it to his son Alexander and thereafter its glories rapidly increased. Aloysius Alexander Gonzaga was the first to fix his residence there, after strengthening its fortifications and rebuilding its

palaces. His successor, Alfonso, Aloysius's uncle, who was paralysed in his lower limbs, resided alternately there and at his neighbouring country house of Gambaredolo, where he was murdered in 1592. When Aloysius set out for Castelfelfredo, Rodolfo equipped him with a troop of servants. He could not refuse his brother, this time, to his face, but had no intention of entering Castelfelfredo in a sort of triumph. So outside Castiglione he sent them all back. Little did he profit. The coachman lost his way, and they arrived at the gate of the town when it was already closed, as was done at sundown. Even when Aloysius had declared himself, the sentinels would not open the fortress till Alfonso had had the arrival explained to him. Alfonso kept them waiting till he thought he had prepared a sufficiently magnificent welcome for the all-important nephew. At the last the gates were flung wide, the drawbridge lowered, and a procession of the gentlemen of the castle appeared with lighted torches, and from the gate to the palace the road was lined with troops. A tower was assigned to Aloysius, royally furnished and with beds magnificent enough to satisfy even Borlasco. 'God help us!' exclaimed Aloysius. 'Look at it! look at the rooms! look at the beds! where have we come to, for our sins!' And he longed to get back to the stripped simplicity of his cell. His stay at Castelfelfredo seemed to him to last whole years.

Yet he escaped next day, and by now matters were sufficiently in train to allow him to approach the Duke of Mantua in person, and he emigrated to the ducal city. But delay followed on delay, and meanwhile he stayed in the Jesuit college there, whose rector, Prospero Malavolta, made a link with the beginnings of the Society, having been received into it by St. Ignatius himself. What seems to have impressed the Fathers of that house especially, was St. Aloysius's extreme common sense and straightforwardness in conversation. I have already said that he spoke but little at any time: but the Italians, loquacious ever, and then perhaps, in particular, in love with phrases, always were surprised by the complete lack of 'trimmings'—*laciniae*—in the Saint's

talk. 'With him,' they said, 'Yes is yes,' and No was most certainly No. His simplicity and respect for others impressed them perhaps the more because, after all, the young man had come to the town for no other reason than to manage the almighty duke. In one point they outstripped what was reasonable. Exhortations are given periodically in Jesuit houses by one of the older and graver Fathers: Malavolta made Aloysius address thus the Community, a thing never, at any rate, done by one who is not a priest. Extremely confused, Aloysius had to obey, and spoke on our Lord's command—'that you love one another as I have loved you.'

The actual course of events is not easy to follow, because Cepari knew on what thin ice he trod in speaking of the matter at all. Rodolfo's subsequent career had, by then, been enough to make the Duke or anyone else regret any favour done him. However, we can see that Aloysius hedged himself round with relatives belonging to the Mantuan court, especially Prosper Gonzaga, who had acted at his baptism as the old Duke's proxy, and Fabio Gonzaga, a cousin of the Duke. The Duke's Secretary of State, Tulio Petrozzari, a man who had been in constant correspondence with Don Ferrante, appears also to have been fairly accessible. However, Aloysius wrote to his mother on October 26th, 1589:

The Peace of Christ. I send the messenger to Your Ladyship because I see that the audience with the Duke is getting postponed far beyond what I expected, for though he is in his own State, he is continually in motion between Mantua and Marmirolo, so much so, that Don Fabio assured me the day before yesterday that not once since His Highness came into his State has he had a single hour in which he considered that he could grant me a quiet hearing such as my business requires and as the Duke himself promised. I am not failing in any care that I think I ought to take: I have Don Fabio for procurator and Don Prospero for solicitor. But I don't dare to hustle them more than I am doing, because I haven't got to be exhorted by seculars to patience, a virtue which I really ought to

preach to them ! So I tell this to Your Ladyship and beg you to tell Don Alfonso, lest he remain in suspense and wonder what I am waiting for. Directly I get my audience, I will tell you and my uncle, to whom in conclusion I commend myself in the Lord.

Aloysius at last got the interview, which the Duke had quite clearly not wanted to grant him. The picture of the Duke engaged in escaping Aloysius is almost comic—remember that Vincent was only six years older than Aloysius himself and in the hey-day of his extreme extravagance, but very susceptible, and sure that if once they met he would give in to the forceful young scholastic. However, they met. The interview lasted an hour and a half, and at the end Vincent had given in, hands down. However, the matter was not quite finished. On one thing Vincent insisted. He would not see Rodolfo. The insolent young Marquis had offended him too deeply. Moreover, the mischief-makers, defeated in their main object, had at least wanted to save their faces. It was gall and wormwood that Aloysius should obtain what had been refused to some of the most important persons of the Empire. They began to say—apparently the Secretary of State was one of them, nervous, no doubt, of his relations with those who seeing themselves counted less cogent than Aloysius, would feel insulted and save the insult up for a future quarrel—that the submission of the Duke had better be assigned to the intercession of the great nobles interested in the affair, and not to Aloysius alone. Even, a letter to the Emperor was talked about. Aloysius, desperate at the new suggestion of delay, appealed frankly to Fabio Gonzaga to get his brother received at Mantua, and not to involve anyone save himself. He wrote on November 5th :

I implore Your Lordship to see that His Highness consents to restore my brother to favour ; there cannot possibly but be some method of annulling his banishment that is to the taste of His Highness. I beg of you, since the Lord Duke promised me to do this for the sake of the

blessed God, in whose Name I asked this favour, do not let the upshot, having him back in his good graces, be sought through the intercession of other princes. I write this to Your Lordship because of a plan proposed to me not from any idea of His Highness, but out of his own head by Don Tullio—it concerns the Emperor. As it is not the Duke who has sought for this, it would only cause new difficulties and prolong the business so that I could not have the satisfaction of seeing him back in the Duke's favour before I go. If letters from other Noble Persons are required, when once the favour I ask is guaranteed, I could get them before my brother actually arrives in Mantua. To conclude, I pray for you every grace from the Lord. The College of Mantua, Nov. 5, 1589.

Aloysius got the Secretary of State to put in writing the whole long list of charges that could be alleged against Rodolfo, went back with it to Castiglione, and made his brother answer it point by point. Apparently Aloysius had just been going to leave Mantua when the indictment was handed to him. He wrote therefore hurriedly—contrary to his custom he merely writes 'November,' instead of the full date—and the address is lacking, but presumably his correspondent was again Fabio or Prospero.

I was just going to leave Mantua when I received the packet from the Most Illustrious Don Tullio which I send to Your Excellency, and I seize the occasion to recommend the notorious affair, with the most humble respect, to you, that you should interpose, with His Excellency the Lord Duke of Mantua for the favour and protection of the Lord Marquis my brother your most devoted servant. I shall regard this supreme favour as done for the love of God our Lord, and from Him I trust that nothing, but our good, will result from it. The Lord Duke to whom I had written answered favourably, nor is anything lacking save a word from you to establish the thing as it should be, and more in conformity with the will of His Divine Majesty who may He

grant to Your Lordship every good grace : From the College of Mantua, Nov., 1589.

Vincent had as a matter of fact, with sudden and irritating obstinacy, announced that if he did the thing at all, he would do it at the prayer of Aloysius and at no one else's : hence, when Aloysius returned with Rodolfo's apologia, the Duke read it, professed himself satisfied, and Aloysius returned once more to Castiglione to fetch his brother. Rodolfo arrived, very meek for the moment, without more retinue 'than befitted his family and state,' unarmed, and uncurred. The Duke and he embraced, and the Duke asked both the brothers to stay to dinner. Rodolfo did so ; but Aloysius excused himself and went back to the much preferable meal at the college. The Duke implored him to come back after it to the theatricals with which the day was characteristically to end : Aloysius smiled broadly and said he was afraid his companion would not approve of them. Thus the reconciliation was accomplished, and Solferino was assured to Rodolfo and his heirs for ever, as they optimistically supposed.

Just before he left Mantua, he wrote the following note to Fabio Gonzaga, gracefully attributing almost all the success of his visit to Fabio :

The Peace of Christ. Thanks be to our Lord God who in His infinite charity and mercy has willed to bring to a happy end so long and intricate an affair by means of Your Lordship, who has thus brought back peace to our House. Your Lordship has acquired great merit for this with God, for whom I accept this favour and pray Him to reward you in heaven, and meanwhile I conclude by hoping for you a pledge of the eternal rewards in the shape of consolation from the Lord here upon earth. The College of Mantua, 1589. Your devoted and obedient servant in the Lord.

I acknowledge that Aloysius had scored an astounding triumph, and it is my considered conviction that, had he lived, he would have made himself the first man in Europe, by sheer force of personality, before he was thirty. However, the future

of Solferino and of the Gonzagas there was not a happy one. After the assassination of Rodolfo, the fief for some reason went to the third surviving brother Cristierno, 'a turbulent and cruel prince,' says the annotator of *Le Piccole Città dei Gonzaga*, who, having made himself hated by his vassals, established himself at Castiglione, near his nephews whose guardian he was. He did but create, however, enmities for them, and the Emperor had to cause the Duke of Guastalla to re-arrange matters, and Cristierno was forced to go back to live in his own town. He had married Marcella, daughter of the Marquis of Malaspina, and his son Charles succeeded him, but against him too his subjects rebelled, and he ignominiously appealed again to Castiglione where his vigorous cousin Gridonia was at the time managing the marquisate, which indeed he tried to appropriate but in this found himself defeated. He was succeeded by his son Ferdinand, a violent despot, against whom, once more, his subjects revolted, and murdered all his ministers, counsellors and officers, and proclaimed a republic. The title and lands followed the sinking fortunes of the family.

Aloysius had meanwhile been insisting with his brother that he really must marry Elena Aliprandi. She was, I recall, the daughter of Giovanni Antonio Aliprandi, a respectable Lombard, who was the Master of Rodolfo's mint. (Not that his respectability prevented him from forging papal coinage, as I shall say, a fact fraught with disastrous consequences to Rodolfo.) The young marquis had carried her off and after a while married her, but no one knew about it. So far as I can judge from Cepari's naturally evasive chronicle, Aloysius, while Rodolfo was with him at Mantua, full of gratitude for the acquisition of Solferino, obtained from him at least the promise that Rodolfo would come to see him at Milan, whither he now wanted to go. I do not see why Aloysius wanted to go to Milan at all, unless it were that he wished to be near Rodolfo till he had seen this matter through, but also wished to continue his studies, the interruption of which he felt very keenly, and much as he disliked the prospect of a winter in the

north, Rodolfo promised he would come to see him at Milan, so Aloysius went there on November 25th, and his companion-brother was sent to Venice. Rodolfo arrived in January, just at the moment when Aloysius was making his thanksgiving after Communion. He kept his brother waiting for two hours, feeling, we may surmise, that the business would be difficult, and that he could not win too much help from God. The brothers then met: they expressed the customary politenesses: and finally Rodolfo acknowledged that he had been married to Elena for fifteen months. Naturally Aloysius was pleased; but could not make up his mind, at first, whether or no his brother was bound to make the marriage public. He wrote to Rome, and took advice in Milan itself, and apparently told his brother by word of mouth what the decision was—namely, that he owed it to Elena at all costs to announce that he and she were married. Rodolfo sent a messenger to him, saying we know not what: Aloysius sent him back with the following long letter:

Most Illustrious Lord Brother in Christ,

The Peace of Christ. I thank Your Lordship for sending me the messenger, to whom I have explained fully that according to the verdict and opinion of competent persons, and among them the one with whom you treated here in Milan, and according to my own feeling, in Domino, you are bound in conscience and under pain of mortal sin. Nothing then remains for me to add to Your Lordship, save to pray you, and indeed to implore you, for the love of God, and the Heart of Jesus Christ, and for the sake of the Blessed Virgin, not to cheat me of the hopes that I have hitherto had of you, and which you have confirmed for me by your oath—but to put into execution one of the two plans that I have explained to the Archpriest. [The Archpriest of Castiglione, who, presumably, was the messenger.] If you do this, I shall rejoice to have you as a brother in Christ: and as I have always assisted you and desired to serve you, so for the future I will never cease to serve you; wishing that I might have the chance of risking my own life

for the salvation of Your Lordship's soul. Desire for this it was that prompted me to leave Rome and spend this winter in Lombardy, disastrously enough for my studies. All this seems to me little, if *acquiram Christo te fratrem in illo carissimum*—if I can win you to Christ, a brother in Him most dear. But if I do not win this, as brother merely *secundum carnem*—according to the flesh—I neither know you nor will to recognize you, for now it is more than 4 years that as such I died to you : so I think I should feel very ashamed of myself, were I, after abandoning everything else, and even myself, for the love of Christ, now out of human affection *erubescerem Christum*—I should blush at Christ, and pretend He had not been offended. For Christ Himself said : Go and reprove your brother : if he listens to you, you have gained your brother : but if he will not, let him be to you as a heathen and a publican. Hence I intend to act as follows. I will wait 12 days, beginning from tomorrow, for your answer. When I receive it, conformably, moreover, to what it ought to be, to which the example of the Lord Duke of Mantua and of your uncle Lord Alfonso by itself ought to suffice to move you,¹ not to mention any services received from me, and above all the obligation you owe to the blessed God—well, as I say, if you act thus, I shall return happy to Rome. But if you act otherwise with God and myself, I shall wind up the matter in the way I have told the Archpriest. I shall be sorry for my sad fate, and I shall leave it to God to bring a remedy with His strong and holy Hand. I beg Your Lordship once more to guard yourself therefrom, because God is always God, whether He waits for repentance, or whether He punishes offences committed against Himself and indeed against those who wish to be His servants. So do not fail to do your duty : do not fail : *et iterum*, do not fail. Observe, I have

¹ The Duke of Mantua had been doubtful whether his marriage, contracted in 1584, with Eleanor of Tuscany, was valid. He caused enquiries to be made, regardless of public opinion or of his own feelings. Alfonso had married a lady of the humble name of Maggi, but was not ashamed of her and went about with her in public.

said that to you thrice : for assuredly, if you fail, you will repent it. Meanwhile I pray to God to dispose your heart aright, and to give you finally that happiness and abundance of grace that with all my heart and with all my affection I desire for you. Milan, Feb. 6, 1590.

Thus could Aloysius write to a brother whom he loved sincerely : and such was the vehemence of his soul that he could communicate to the very paper. This mingling of objective advice, with extreme sternness, and intense affection, seems to me to reveal Aloysius more than almost anything hitherto.

Apparently Rodolfo then came to Milan, or sent a message asking for a respite, probably alleging that he must go to Germany to obtain the sanction of the Emperor. Aloysius wrote again on February 9th :

Your Lordship will have understood that the plan I propose to you is all the easier because of the two things I asked of you in my first letter after your departure from Milan. I now bind you to one only, which you owe to me not only as a brother but simply as a Christian. In conformity with what you told me, I wrote to Rome about my return, which, though I do not know the exact date, will be, I do know, soon. And since I have first got to see you on your way to Germany, in case you do not make a better resolution, then I think that *quo citius tanto melius*—the sooner you go the better. So make haste, and rest assured that I am not in the least likely to fail in what I promised you, provided it is possible. But on your side do not fail in what you owe me, *et iterum*, do not fail, as indeed I am sure you will *not* fail, and so, commending you as warmly as I can to the Lord, and praying for you from His Divine Majesty all happiness and fullness of His holy graces, I end. Milan, Feb. 9, 1590. Your Most Illustrious Lordship's affectionate brother in the Lord, Aluigi Gonzaga, S.J.

P.S.—I want altogether that we should be good friends, and that too *in Domino* ; and from Him I have to obtain

strength to achieve this, even though by means of religious violence: and remember that of two things that you promised me—to unveil the altar, and, to remove her from your house, I bind you now only to one, and that too after your return from Germany. You have to go there before I go to Rome, and that is in the hands of my superiors there who have told me it will have to be soon.

Scoprire l'altare is an almost slang phrase meaning 'to reveal the secret.' I gather then that Aloysius had first told Rodolfo that he must announce his marriage, and, send Elena somewhere else till he had done so, else scandal would go on being given. I gather too that he had threatened he would himself announce the marriage if Rodolfo did not. Rodolfo then said he must go to Germany. Aloysius thereupon, presumably because he saw that Rodolfo really meant to take action, agreed that this might have to be done, and even said that he need not announce the marriage till his return, and even, that Elena need not leave the house meanwhile, since Rodolfo would not be there. But he absolutely insisted that Rodolfo was to start, and start at once, because he was determined to see him actually on his way, while on his side he might have to return to Rome any day. Rodolfo, having made up his mind to take one step, took two, and consented to announce the marriage even before his journey over the Alps. Aloysius in great delight betook himself to Castiglione, along with another lay-brother companion, to whom he said that having gone first to Castiglione on man's business, he was now returning thereto on God's. All went well. Donna Marta now recognized Elena as her daughter-in-law; there was a general reconciliation and Aloysius himself announced the marriage not only to the populace, but to the Duke of Mantua, to Don Alfonso, to various relatives, including the two Cardinals at Rome. Also he preached at last the sermon that his mother had long ago asked for: he felt even now a diffidence about it; he preached, not in the parish church, but in a chapel belonging to a confraternity, and forbade the

bell to be rung. None the less, and of course, the whole place knew it was going to happen, and the chapel was packed. He preached on Saturday, March 3rd, the day before Quinquagesima Sunday, when the carnival would be raging. He told everyone to go to Communion next day, and the clergy were kept up all night hearing confessions. Seven hundred persons went to Communion next day: Aloysius served the Mass, and in the afternoon they all came back to Catechism. Meanwhile he succeeded in persuading many people who had been copying what they thought was the example of Rodolfo, to marry, and turned several who had quarrelled into firm and enduring friends. He then left for Milan on March 2nd, hoping for a swift return to Rome, since Acquaviva had written to him, on March 10th, dissuading him from a summer journey to Rome:

Brother Aluigi Gonzaga,

I have been gladdened in the Lord by the good outcome of the business you have in hand, and that the Lord has brought the Lord Marquis to such good ends. I pray that His D. Majesty may preserve him in His grace, and in such good resolutions. As for the time of your return to Rome, Fr. Maggi wrote to you by my order last week what seemed right—either after Easter or in the autumn; and when your coming will be most convenient it will be for our consolation here, and I hope that our Lord will be served thereby, and whenever you come, we shall see you gladly; keep yourself in good health and pray for me in your prayers.

On March 31st he wrote to Aloysius's mother:

Most Illustrious Lady,

Our brother Aluigi's letter, your Ladyship's son, gladdened me much, that the business on which he went had had good success, wherein I now feel even greater consolation reading the confirmation thereof in your own letter, and the great satisfaction that conformably with my own wishes has been given thereby, and that our Lord has used

for this result the virtue and prudence of your son. I hope that he will also be of service to religion and give much content to you in particular, to whom I offer my respects and wish for you all that abundance of heavenly gifts that you could wish for yourself and your most illustrious family.

Aloysius had however, by no means, finished with his brother. The wrong which had been righted concerned on the whole Elena's good name ; and it remained for Rodolfo to see to his own soul. Aloysius then wrote to him on March 17th, 1590 :

Most Illustrious Lord and Most Respected Brother in Christ,

The Peace of Christ. The desire I have always had for your spiritual welfare, and the consolation I had lately concerning you, in Castiglione, makes me write herein (as the Lord bids me) what in the same Lord I think very useful and expedient for the securing and establishing of that salvation. And this is, that before you go to Germany, during this holy season of Lent, between now and Easter, Your Lordship should bring yourself to make a general confession at least dating from that which I know you made 5 years ago in Mantua, up to the present time. For thus you get the certainty (so far as one ever can in this life) that none of those offences against His Divine Majesty remain upon your soul, which perhaps were left behind by the more or less furtive and secret confessions that you made during the time when through human respect you were not daring to profess yourself Christ's servant. [Since the Castiglione clergy thought that Rodolfo was living in sin, either they would have refused him absolution if he did not mention the matter, or, if he mentioned it, they would have exacted public ratification of the public scandal, which Rodolfo did not intend to make. Therefore he had had to slip away and go to confession, if at all, where he was not known.] This will, I think, be all the easier because you have already overcome and removed the main difficulty. So nothing

now remains but the fruit of hope and the very certain pledge of the grace of God which can be taken for granted from the means that I accordingly recommend to Your Lordship so strongly, so strongly for this end. Though Our Lord knows well how to preserve this grace, He who has deigned to move your heart thereto, and better than any words or services of mine, yet it remains my duty to instruct and direct you, at least to satisfy the relation in which I stand to you, and to co-operate for what remains, as I have hitherto done, with the Providence of the same Lord, and I put before you two means in particular which occur to me.

One is, to have within you always that supreme esteem of the grace of God—oh, just as I could never say enough to express even the least part of it, so no one else can make us fully understand it save the blessed God. So I leave it to Him to teach it to you. Only I will say that, even as God is above all created things, honours, possessions and anything else you like, so (were it possible) must be the esteem that we have within us of His Divine Majesty, above every other esteem or notion. And then though the limited capacity of our heart forbid this, at least we must ensure its being so great as, in our hearts, it can be. The second means is to co-operate with the degree of that grace, *providendo bona non solum coram Deo sed etiam coram hominibus*—putting forth good works not only before God but also before men. With regard then to the blessed God, I remind you of what I have already said to you by word of mouth about His due religious worship. And since it seems that to commend religion is the suitable business owed to God by a ‘Religious,’ I will now descend to a few special points, which you can attend to according to the measure of grace that the Lord shall deign to communicate to you.

Among them, the first is to commend yourself to God in the morning with some such prayer as is the Daily Exercise or some other such prayer in which you could also think of

some one of the points which you can find in the Daily Exercise placed at the end of the little book I send you, compiled by order of Monsignor Cardinal Borromeo of happy memory ; and since there are in it other suggestions that you can read there, I will not enlarge on this further save to recommend Mass to you, according to our compact.

Next, I would not like you ever to go to bed at night without first seeing in yourself whether you are conscious of offence against God, so that if you feel guilty of mortal sin, from which God preserve you, you may resolve to cancel it so soon as possible by means of the sacrament of Penance. You must recall that this is always necessary if you have to be sorry for anything, but you must never, for that, wait for a fixed time, such as Easter, or some other such time, because no one can promise you that you will live till then.

Next, ' to put forth good works before men,' I recommend to you the respect you owe to your relatives and superiors, about which I wish to say nothing since I assume how truly you have it at heart. Wholly because of the sense of obligation I feel myself, and not because I think you really need it, I commend to you the reverence that you owe to to the Lady Marchioness your Mother—just *as* mother, and, *such* a mother !

Further, you know, as being the head of your brothers, how right it is that you should keep them united, and act so that they may ever have reason to be glad of this union. About your vassals I will merely say that God has put them in a special and individual manner into your safe-keeping, perhaps to convey to you the special and spiritual care that Your Lordship must have of them, seeing in the Providence of God towards yourself the way in which you ought to provide for them.

For the rest, I place myself in the hands of the same Lord God, to instruct and direct you in the path of this life, till we reach that happy fatherland : it is that I may see myself along with you and others therein, that I have embraced the state of life in which I am.

Incidentally, as to the confession that I mentioned at the beginning, I suggest to you as spiritual father one of our own people inasmuch as they are obliged by our Institute to be skilled in such charges. When you have to go to Mantua, I would highly praise for this purpose Fr. Mattia, who was confessor to Duke William, of happy memory. And when you do not want to leave Castiglione, I have already spoken to the Father Rector of Brescia, who places the college at your disposal, and will at once provide a confessor whenever you ask for one.

Now I finish. And since the execution of what I have commended to you must come rather from God's grace than from your own efforts or my recommendation, therefore I offer, and promise you, that in my prayers, such as they are, I will always keep you commended in the sight of His Divine Majesty, and may He keep you and guide you to that happy end to which His elect do come. Milan, March 17, 1590.

A day or two later (March 21st) he wrote again to his sister-in-law, enlisting her influence on Rodolfo's behalf :

Illustrious Lady, my Kinswoman,

The Peace of Christ. I think it right to begin to avail myself of the help of Your Ladyship for the spiritual profit of His Lordship the Marquis, that I put before him myself in Castiglione. I beg you then to urge him by word of mouth what I do by writing in the letter that comes with this one. Make sure before he goes to Germany that he ensures the good estate wherein he may find himself by a general confession, as I hope, according to the method I put before him. I think that Your Ladyship will have received some spiritual books that I left orders at Brescia should be sent to you. In conclusion I commend myself to you and pray from the Lord for your perfect contentment. Milan, March 21, 1590. Your Most Illustrious Ladyship's affectionate servant in our Lord, Aluigi Gonzaga, S.J.

That Saints are not omnipotent in dealing with the human will, you can see, alas, from the later history of Rodolfo. So

long as Aloysius lived, he could manage him : but after his death, he again ran riot, not, one must confess, without provocation. Alfonso Gonzaga of Castel Goffredo had, for all his submissiveness, been brooding over the rejection by Rodolfo of his daughter Catherine, and almost immediately, it would appear, after the Saint's death, persuaded the Emperor to alienate the fief in favour of that very Catherine. Whereupon eight men from Castiglione marched to Gambaredolo, where Alfonso was, and assassinated him. They returned and told Rodolfo, who immediately marched on Castel Goffredo and took it. It is not surprising that Rodolfo was instantly charged with having instigated the murder. No more surprising is it that the man in possession was acquitted. The only astonishing thing is that it got so far as a trial at all. A year of harsh misrule, in which Catherine had as much to suffer as the vassals, followed. During it, Rodolfo was further charged with coining papal money in his Castiglione mint, summoned to Rome, and refused to go. Whereupon he was excommunicated. This, together with their general exasperation, gave the people a melancholy courage. On January 31st, 1593, he was shot on the steps of the church of Castel Goffredo, and the day of his death was kept thereafter as an annual holiday. He was only twenty-four—one year older when he died than Aloysius was ! One authority says that he was buried in unconsecrated ground, but tries to argue that the charge of forgery against him was disproved, and that Donna Marta obtained his due reburial. Another has said that he was buried with Catholic rites, but that the bishop ordered his exhumation and burial in unblest earth. Perhaps, given a Catholic funeral at the outset, he was indeed exhumed and buried as an excommunicate, and later still his mother, whom he had made to suffer so but who still loved her son, obtained the second re-burial. Enough to say that his murder was the sign for a revolt. The peasants attacked the castle, took it, pillaged the armoury, and with the weapons killed the garrison.

Francis, who succeeded him, had learned but little wisdom,

and maltreated Elena in her turn, who consoled herself, however, by actually marrying another of this incredible clan. No wonder Donna Marta left Castiglione, and went with her youngest son Diego, who was born in Spain, to Solferino. That did not help her much. In 1597 she was carried off, along with the boy, by brigands or peasants in revolt, who proposed to attack Castiglione, and assassinate the reigning family. When they arrived, the gates of course were barred. They took her and Diego from the horses to which they had been strapped, and ordered her to bid the gates be opened. She refused. They shot the boy Diego who ran to his mother's arms and died there. 'Now,' said they, 'will you bid those gates be opened?' Even less would the gallant lady then consent. So her they stabbed and left her bleeding to death in the dust. They galloped off to find reinforcements. A citizen of the place stole out and picked her up that she might die, at least, in her own town. And as she lay dying, she saw in vision her boy, Aloysius, and he, saying not a word, looked at her long, and smiled his grave smile, and gave her back to the life that she had had, one could have thought, enough of. I will but add that in 1602 the fief of Castel Goffredo was annexed to the Duchy of Mantua and belonged no more to any particular branch of the Gonzagas. Despite the privileges with which Vincent I of Mantua and his successors had enriched it, the war of succession of Mantua and then that of Spain reduced it to ruins. Its walls have now disappeared; still, parts of the grim Gonzaga castle survive, with its towers; and the palace, now Palazzo Acerbi, belongs to a family not unconnected with England. General Giovanni Acerbi, a fierce enthusiast for the ideals of Mazzini, was actually a political exile in our land. The little city, with such sad memories, is now a prosperous commercial centre.

CHAPTER III

TRANQUILLITAS MAGNA

From afar looking towards the Promises, and saluting them, and confessing that they are but pilgrims and sojourners upon the earth. Men who speak thus, show that they are looking for a Fatherland. And if they had been recalling the one whence they had come forth, they would have had time to turn back thither. But they were reaching out towards a better one, that is, a heavenly one.—Hebrews, xi.

ALOYSIUS therefore left for Milan on March 2nd. The spring was raw in Lombardy : his hands became swollen and chapped, but he still would not wear gloves. As they passed through Piacenza, one of the Fathers who had seen him, last, at Parma, with a troop of servants, found him cleaning his boots, with those frozen hands, and somehow this sight touched him more than anything. In one sense he had not felt the cold : or rather, he had felt the world's chill worse. When he entered the College at Milan, he cried out that this was like coming from a frozen place into the warmth. None the less he fell ill. He was given a Brother Salombrini to attend to him, and liked him so much that he begged to have him as it were attached to him, and much to the regret of the community, this was done, so that Aloysius took the Brother with him wherever he went, and in fact, to Rome.¹

He threw himself whole-heartedly into the life of the house—he almost seemed to have become a novice again, and used little pious methods for preserving recollection, and gave names

¹ Ceparì provides us here with one of his puzzles, which are not few. He definitely says that this illness and this arrangement about the Brother took place after Aloysius's return to Milan. Yet he also says that he followed the Brother's advice so closely that he quickly succeeded in making peace between Rodolfo and the Duke of Mantua. Hence I take it that this acquaintanceship and mutual trust must have established themselves earlier than this, or, that despite the exterior reconciliation, the Duke and the Marquis were still at loggerheads personally, which indeed they were.

o the tables in the refectory which he got leave to lay—' Our Lord's table ' ; ' Our Lady's table,' and so forth. The more he had been occupied, of late, in affairs of State, the more he felt he must now efface himself, or appear only so as to be seen doing what all the others did, both in the house, and by teaching catechism and the like, on Sundays, in the public squares. And when others were preaching, he spent his time going from street to street collecting an audience. I think that he was always very sensitive—and no wonder—about begging there. A custom existed that before taking the final vows, a Jesuit should put up with that humiliation. One of the Milan Brothers was to go begging thus. Aloysius obtained leave to accompany him. He was so delighted that he went off at once to tell the Brother, though night had fallen and the Brother had duly gone to bed. It is usual to observe very strict silence at the end of the day, in any religious house ; nor do Brothers expect to be woken up just then to be told of such arrangements. But, just as there is a tale that Aloysius used sometimes suddenly to run at full speed down to the corridor leading to the chapel where he so much wanted to be, so I suppose on this occasion rules had to cede to impulse ! In the house, they were struck by his extreme charm and considerateness ; outside, he could be affectionately firm, yet helpful, as when an ex-vassal of his came up, and sought his help in some financial trouble, giving him long-forgotten titles such as Excellency—he gently reproved him for that, and recommended him to his brother—but also, relentless quite in the old way, when he thought it necessary. A lady, dressed in some outrageous eccentricity of fashion, came up to him when he was more than usually shabby, and asked after a certain Father at the Jesuit College. Since she said she had known him, and since one document tells us that the ' Father ' was Aloysius himself, I take it that the flippant lady pretended she did not recognize him, and that Aloysius quite well saw through her. Anyhow, when he said that that Religious indeed was there, and she exclaimed, looking down her nose at Aloysius's old cassock—' O, the poor man ! what a place

he has gone to kill himself at ! '—the Saint somewhat flamed. He relentlessly assured her that far from being dead, the person in question was very much alive : and, if it was a matter of clothes . . . well, her own—And he rated her so soundly that, contrary to what you might expect, she really did amend ! He started once more the practice of asking for criticisms in the Refectory, for at Rome he had given it up in despair, since, even in those consecrated walls, instead of finding fault with him, they praised him ! Here they at least said, once more, that when he was bowed to, he did not always bow back. It looked like haughtiness : but was not : at Castiglione, he had, as I said, quite simply, had to carry his hat in his hand, so constant were the salutes : but here, where they were rare in the great city, he fell between whiles into his abstraction, and did not notice. Perhaps it was this that led up to a conversation, which was almost an examination, with Fr. Achilles Gagliardi, upon prayer. The priest wanted to see whether, as he surmised, Aloysius had that mystical gift of unitive prayer which, as a rule, renders men incapable of exterior occupation, at least while they are thus praying. Having concluded that Aloysius was indeed thus closely united with God in prayer, he suggested that this might be contrary to the spirit of the Society of Jesus, which was, to be accessible to everyone, and to give up, for that, if need be, even the joys of contemplation. Aloysius merely answered that if he found his prayer interfered with his free service of his fellows, he would at once suspect it and judge it unfitting.¹

It was while he was praying, at this time, that he felt suddenly convinced, as though from God, that he had but a short time left to live, and that he must consequently detach his spirit, where detachment still was needed, from the elements of this life. He had little enough change to make : only, though he worked as hard as ever at his theology, he felt that his interest had faded. Even, when the glad news first

¹ Gagliardi had himself written a short introduction to mystical prayer, and wished also to test his theories by Aloysius's experience. It is now increasingly clear that mystical union with God need not be interfered with by an active life.

came that he was to return to Rome, he asked his friend and professor Bernardino Medici to say a Mass that his desire to do so might be unfulfilled, if God were not thereby to be glorified. However, soon enough the definite order came, and he wrote to several friends that he was going. To Cepari himself, he said :

I am sure it will not be at all difficult for me to persuade you how glad I am at my appointment to the Roman College, to see again my spiritual fathers and brothers there, as I so much desire ; I shall join in the pleasure of that association with you and with so many of our acquaintances, with, I hope, in our Lord, even more satisfaction than heretofore. I beg you to commend me to them separately, though in general *ex toto corde, mente, et animo*—with all my heart and mind and soul—I commend myself with all affection to all the Roman College. April, 1590.

There is something almost to remind one of St. Paul, writing to his dear Philippians, in this letter. In another, which has not survived, he says to his very close friend, Fr. Gaspar Alpieri, that he went with joy to Rome, seeing that ‘ if we have any country here on earth, I acknowledge none but Rome, where I was born in Jesus Christ.’

Another reason, however, that makes it clear that peace was far from re-established, save externally, is a letter sent on March 25th to his brother.

Peace to you. I had just finished the enclosed letter, when I received the one sent by Your Lordship. On the one hand it gave me great consolation, for I saw from it that my efforts with the relatives of your House have succeeded. But on the other, were I to take its tone as the deliberate expression of your will, and not a mere explosion of the feelings and the lower appetite, which when not subdued by reason is apt, in such cases, to be easily excited, it would seem to show a certain lack of charity and concord. Yet the circumspection with which you will henceforward proceed and the respect you will show to all to whom it is

due, will in time overcome all difficulties, if only Your Lordship will take care always to rely on God's help and remain in His grace, from which I hope and indeed promise you every blessing. So far as I go, be sure that nothing will ever come between us, for you know that in spirit I am always with you though absent in the flesh—save what might separate you from God. So long as you take care to preserve the favour of His Divine Majesty, I shall never fail to render you all the friendly services that my vocation permits, as I do now by the letter I enclose to Her Ladyship, our mother. Please deliver it yourself, and ask her to show it to you, so that you may see from it how much I have your welfare at heart. But indeed I think there is no need of further proof of this: as I have already said, nothing that I may hear about you, save an offence against God, will distress me, while any good news of you will always be a great consolation to me.

I thought, too, that now that my departure from Rome has been postponed till after Easter, it could but help if, as well as the letter you intended to send me, according to our compact, to take to Rome, you were to send a letter by the post from Mantua, mentioning me, and telling the Most Illustrious Cardinals in Rome of your journey to Germany, and promising to fulfil conscientiously your duties as their relative. Thus you would oblige them the more to give you due recognition, and this mark of attention could not but promote the favourable issue for which I have been negotiating.

I would also be glad if you would pay the banker the 45 gold scudi that I borrowed (on note of hand) on the credit of Geronimo Verduro in Rome: and please, if you approve, commission the Archpriest or some other person equally worthy of trust to pay, if it becomes necessary, the rest of the 100 I spoke of, for the other purpose I mentioned. Do this in the way that you judge best. I propose to take advantage of the opportunity presented to start after Easter, in the good company of our Fathers, on the journey

to my home, Rome, and shall, in order to remain in this company, go by Genoa. Passing through Tortona, I shall pay my respects to Her Excellency the Duchess [Christina Duchess of Lorraine: cf. p. 68]. I should be glad if you could find out whether a letter I sent to Dr. Cuticio in Mantua, asking for some books, arrived. If he has not received them yet, I pray Your Lordship to send them to me by Don Fabio Gonzaga: they must have been sent off from Rome by the agent of Monsignor Cardinal Scipio Gonzaga, so Fr. Hercules writes to me. If a good opportunity could be found to send certain other books to Rome, I should be glad, and would send them to Your Lordship so soon as possible. In conclusion I commend myself to you with all my heart. I have nothing to add save the wish that you should fear God and keep His commandments (*timeat Deum et mandata eius observet*): then you need fear nothing else, for God can do all things. But He requires us to co-operate with His Grace. May He protect you and grant you every happiness and blessing, which is my unceasing prayer. Milan, March 25th, 1590.

P.S.—I shall be very grateful if Your Lordship could remember this long list of commissions and requests, and let me have an answer so soon as possible. It was quite right of you to open the letters, and if any more come into your hands, by all means do the same. If you can get a copy of my letter of Feb. 6, kindly send it to me.¹

Early in May, the party set off from Rome. It was quite a large one and included Fr. Gregory Mastrilli, who had been preaching the Lent in Milan. The famine, which was to lead as ever to the plague, was beginning to be severe. The Apennines were full of starving men and women. 'God,' said Mastrilli to Aloysius, 'is good not to have allowed us to be born among the lower classes!' Aloysius, who already was thinking that the other two Fathers were inclined to make a fuss about him, answered, it has always seemed to me, rather

¹ See *Eco di San Luigi*, Milan, 1891, No. 22.

tartly, that it was still better not to have been born a Turk. . . . They passed through Siena. Aloysius wished to go to Communion in St. Catherine's room. After it he was asked to give an address to an audience of young men. He agreed, went into the church, reflected and made a few notes. When he was asked for these afterwards, he said he had lost them. They were however found later on in a volume of St. Bernard, from whom he made long quotations. You will not forget that St. Bernard was, with St. Augustine, his favourite author. The sermon was on : ' Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only ' (James i, 22). The notes are very short. He says first that God speaks to us by personal inspirations. These, he adds, ought to be kept to yourself. The manna, he remarks, corrupted if it was stored for other purposes than for eating on the Sabbath : so too God's ' words ' are to be fed on, secretly, in the soul, and not kept for anything else. Then, God speaks to us in the Scriptures : but it is no good knowing them if we do not live according to them. Finally God speaks to us by His benefits, which we ought to return to God by gratitude. All things should return to God, as waters go back to the sea. If they do not, they turn rotten. Students especially should offer their talents to God. *Why* now, ought we to ' do ' what God says, as well as hear it ? Enough, if only because God tells us to. But also, look at His rewards ! And here Aloysius develops the sort of example that he understood. Suppose the Grand Duke, who is now expected at Siena, took some poor man of the town, made him his joint heir, clothed and fed him as his adopted son, on the one condition he gave up his filthy hovel and his rags and association with the common people and frequented none but the heir-apparent and the aristocracy, who would merely ' hear ' that, and not immediately accept the offer ? So God does to us. Our only excuse is, that we do not understand. (Aristotle, *E.N.* 10). So, like babies, we appreciate an apple or our nurse's milk better than the prospect of our father's estates. May God mature us, till we see that all the world is low compared to the heights to which God would lift

us. It is said that several young men were so moved by these reflections that they joined religious orders.

After leaving Siena, they had to cross a river which is presumably the Paglia. Storms turn it into a furious torrent. They reached it just where it divides into numerous branches, and even in dry weather the tiny channel left in the midst of an Italian stream runs often very deep and strong. Now, however, the water had overflowed the banks, and when they were half-way across, they could not see where to move next. Aloysius said: 'We cannot cross this.' Just then they saw a young man fishing, who appeared to be moving safely to and fro. So thither they went, and crossed where he had crossed, though of eighteen others, who tried to cross lower down, 'the greater part' was drowned. When they turned to thank the fisherman, he had gone away. So the story grew, that this had been Aloysius's guardian angel. At least the tale makes us realize that a journey, then, with men dying of starvation in the hills, and drowning a dozen at a time in flooded streams, was an affair of considerable incident. At last the Dome of St. Peter's, finished that very month, showed itself, like a skyey bubble, on the horizon.

On arriving in Rome, it was settled that Aloysius should have a room to himself. Hitherto, in those crowded houses, he had shared one. The improvement was a doubtful one. It was at the top of a staircase, with one small skylight, about ten foot square, and you could touch the ceiling with your hand. When Aloysius went, later on, to the infirmary, his successor remarked, startingly, that the room was *latrina potius quam cubiculum*. . . . It contained a table, a bed with one woollen blanket, presumably a chair, and a shelf with a Bible and a *Summa* on it. He there resumed his oft-interrupted studies.

Before the year ran out, Rodolfo was already quarrelling once more, this time with his younger brothers, or at least their lawyers or their mother, for they were none of them twenty years old. On October 4th, Aloysius wrote to him:

The Peace of Christ! I received the day before yesterday

a letter from Your Lordship, dated at the beginning of September, which gave me great consolation, on hearing that you had taken such a wise remedy against the illness that the Lord had sent you : you had recourse to the Lord Himself for your health, and I have thanked Him for having given it back to you. And as you write to me, this spiritual medicine that you made use of will not only have restored you to health, but will be able to establish it, and to preserve it in future from relapse. So I pray you to use this medicine not only when it is a matter of physical illness, but even when you are well, directly a spiritual indisposition requires it, for which it was indeed instituted by Christ our Lord, but from which I pray His Divine Majesty to guard you. And I also exhort you to use it as a preservative. One must not wait till one is sick, to take such a medicine, but you must often use it outside of sickness, to obtain the end that you have yourself written to me that you hope to have gained by taking it.

I am delighted to hear that the quarrel with H.H. the Duke of Mantua is completely over, for thus I think it will be easier for you to preserve grace, which is what I chiefly hope from His Divine Majesty, and also that of His Highness, as Lord and Head of your family. Moreover, though I hope and feel quite sure that between you and your brothers there must never any more be differences or quarrels other than what may arise between a father and his sons, that is, for their utility and their good, none the less, while my position does not admit of my treating with you of the current affairs of the world, I will tell you here once and for all what I think in the matter. I think that since every law requires that positive rights should yield to natural ones, you will only be doing what is reasonable and even perhaps your duty if you prefer, in any difference of opinion or dispute that may arise, the natural laws of blood and fraternal union to any law written by the jurists.¹

¹ Aloysius cannot mean that family considerations ought to over-ride the law, unless indeed he accepts to the full the absolute right of

But I hardly think it necessary to remind you of this, since you have it sufficiently at heart, so in conclusion I pray His Divine Majesty to grant you that peace and grace of His that I desire for you. Here in Rome we have again a 'Sede Vacante'² and we are praying for the election of a Supreme Pontiff who may carry out the good desires that the Lord had granted to him who for our sins was taken from us from this world after but few days. Oct. 4, 1590.

It has been said that the original of the next letter was cut into pieces by Guelfucci, its recipient, to serve as relics, but that a copy exists in the archives of the Gesù. However, a letter at Manresa House, Roehampton, has the attestation of Fr. General Beckx to the effect that 'I testify that this letter was written in its entirety by the hand of St. Aloysius Gonzaga Rome, December 15, 1865.' There is one small gap at the top where a piece has been cut out; and one or two creases have obscured a few words: and the paper seems certainly to have been torn, where the creases are, and put together again. It appears then to be the original, once deemed to be destroyed. It was written on December 12th, 1590, to his great friend, then at Naples.

Dearest Brother in Christ,

The Peace of Christ! I had resolved not to write to you till I had had a letter from you, according to our agreement when you left, but on the one hand my affection for you and my desire to derive consolation from a conversation with you by letter (since our separation does not permit any other sort) and again the departure thither of Fr. Mancinelli, make me break my resolution. So I thus salute you *et*

princes. I think he means to state, that though Rodolfo may have the law on his side, let him allow family peace to transcend the law. But he appears to state that the law itself expects that this should happen. Does he mean that even though the *law* itself desires that you should so apply it that peace among kinsfolks should be preserved, yet, you should ensure that peace not merely on legal grounds, but from personal choice, based on reason and sense of duty?

² Sixtus V died on August 27th, 1590: Urban VII was Pope from the 15th-28th September: Gregory XIV, December 5th-October, 1591.

amplector in Domino with all my affection. God knows what a consolation it was that I have received by hearing from Fr. Provincial [i.e., Mancinelli] the good news that he has received from your letter about yourself. May the self-same Lord be He who in this so precious time that He has granted you for your spiritual profit, fills you with His gifts, and so increase in you His grace that it may serve not only for your profit over there, but after your return here for the help and profit of those who especially desire your company and have especial need to be made to go forward in spirit. I am one of them. Meanwhile, help me with your prayers and by recommending me to those of Fr. Pescatore which I desire very very much. I on my side do not fail with my little strength to recommend you to the Lord. May it please His Divine Majesty that we may help one another together in His holy service. So in conclusion I recommend myself to you *iterum atque iterum*, and I pray you commend me to the same Fr. Pescatore and Fr. Mutio de Angelis. Rome, Dec. 12, 1590. Your brother and servant in Christ, Luigi Gonzaga. Fr. Mario Fuccioli salutes you, and says he has heard from you, and that you must make use of him if you want anything, and so you must of me too so far as I can.

On the last day of the year Aloysius wrote spontaneously to his mother, feeling fully at his ease since with her he had not to discuss the kind of subject that needed to be alluded to with Rodolfo :

The Peace of Christ ! I know how much Your Ladyship desires letters from me, and what consolation and satisfaction you get from them, so I wish in this one to seize the occasion of these holy feasts of Christmas to salute you and wish you a happy season, as with most special love I have prayed from the Lord for you in my prayers, such as they are, during this sacred time. It gives me an all the more welcome chance, and more in keeping with my tastes, than any other which, dealing with temporal business and all that

I have once and for all left, is much more disagreeable to me and also I understand much less about it. May God then be He who through the general gladness of the Holy Church and through the pleasure He Himself took in the temporal birth of His sole-begotten Son, comforts your Most Illustrious Ladyship and fills you with every grace ; may He do this through the intercession of His most Holy Mother who, as Your Ladyship can well believe, during this time felt both *distress* and *content* simultaneously : *distress* owing to the temporal poverty which she suffered in a stable, where she could not protect from the cold her Son that was born to her, Jesus Christ, nor yet provide for Him in such difficulties and temporal necessities that were His. We may suppose that these were hers in place of the pains of childbirth from which by a privilege she was exempt. But on the other hand, she felt much content in the sight and presence of God her tiny Son that she saw before her. So as Our Lord says that women, when they are in travail, feel sorrow, but once they have given birth they are so happy that they forget all their past suffering, because a man has been born into the world, so it seems to me that the most glorious Virgin, considering the temporal necessities of her Son, felt sorrow and suffering as of travail because she could not provide for him as she would like : but looking at the same her Son she was comforted and forgot altogether all her woe, not because a man only had been born to her, but because thereto God had been born into the world. So I will go on to take the liberty, because of the position in which I am, to advise Your Most Illustrious Ladyship to do the same : that is, to look at yourself in the example of Mary the blessed Virgin as in a mirror ; and if the cares and temporal anxieties that you have, in looking after your sons who are still young and minors, cause you at times distress and trouble (just as the glorious Virgin also felt pain at the thought of providing temporally for her Son Jesus), you must also console yourself as she did, and receive comfort from her example. She is our true Queen from whose

example we ought to derive more comfort than from the Queen of Spain, whom Your Ladyship served or from anyone else who found herself in the same sort of position. Also, if it is a comfort for the afflicted to have others along with them in the like afflictions, what greater comfort can there be for Your Ladyship than the company of the Blessed Virgin Mary? Since she who accompanies you was what she was, and had troubles and cares so like your own.

I wished to write this to you just as it occurred to me *in Domino*, and to satisfy your desire and the consolation that you tell me you receive together with my letters. Well, with what further concerns certain individuals of the household, of which Monsignor Cardinal della Rovere spoke to me, Your Ladyship will know from His Most Illustrious Lordship what he thinks. I refer myself in this entirely to him, and will only add that if the dispute of which he told me is to be ended otherwise than by a lawsuit (which to me too seems quite inappropriate between brothers), and preferably by arbitration, I think that the arbitrators had far better be chosen there than here, where, owing to distance, evidence either cannot come at all or may arrive much curtailed. You could see, in the north, who would be suitable for this: if perhaps the Lord Duke Vespasian of Sabionetta would do [see p.16], or anyone else that you could choose better than him. I shall earnestly pray Christ Jesus that as the angels sang, at His birth, *Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis*, so He may deign to grant true peace and a right will to those of Your Ladyship's house, with every fullness and abundance of His holy grace. Rome. The last day of December, 1590. With reverence, your son in Christ, Luigi Gonzaga, S.J.

Vespasian has been spoken of above. He died not two months after this, and his character must have been well-known to Aloysius, which makes this allusion the more interesting. Twice more did Aloysius write home (or rather, two more of his letters are preserved) before he wrote those

two most precious letters that concern his last illness and foreshadow his death. On January 26th he wrote to Rodolfo :

The Peace of Christ. It is a long time since I wrote to salute Your Lordship. All the more welcome is the opportunity of doing so now which presents itself. It is, first, to recommend to you an act of justice which has been recommended to me, in favour and help of some young ladies, de' Fersardi, of whom one is already consecrated to God in a convent, the other perhaps is going to enter. I beg Your Lordship to interpose your authority that they be not molested nor hindered in their good desires. Perhaps this request will be set forth in greater detail by him who presents this letter to you. Next I recommend to Your Lordship another work of mercy but one that I think is a precept : and it is, that you would remember, on behalf of your vassals, this year especially, their poverty, which, if distress makes itself felt where you are as it does here and in this city, is indeed extreme. Therefore I commend it earnestly to you, who do not I think at all forget the good advice and the frequentation of those preservative medicines, both for soul and for body, of which you wrote in your last. So I will not say more about this or about anything else, save to tell you in conclusion what consolation I drew from hearing from Her Ladyship your mother of the agreement that you have come to with your brothers about the property about which there was a dispute. In fact, the agreement seems to me to be excellent, and well fitted to produce the union and the concord that I pray and desire from the Lord our God.

At present I am not going to write to our Lady Mother, so I beg Your Lordship to make a point of going to salute her in my name : this will be a consolation to her and at the same time you can give her good news about my health. I beg you at the same time to commend me to the Lady Marchioness your wife, to your brothers, to Monsignor the Archpriest, etc. Rome, Jan. 26, 1591. Your Illustrious Lordship's affectionate brother in our Lord.

It is pleasant to find him writing one little note quite spontaneously to Rodolfo, showing too that he did not forget anniversaries.

The Peace of Christ. Though I have got nothing in particular to write to you about, yet to satisfy the bearer of this letter I have written it ! Also to assure you that by the grace of the Lord I am very well in health. I desire and pray that His Divine Majesty will give the same to Your Lordship *in utroque homine*—in body and soul. To-day is the last day of Carnival and it was to-day or a few days before, if I am not mistaken, that I left Your Lordship last year in Castiglione with most excellent desires and intentions : so now I will not remind you of anything save to remember both now *et in posterum* to put them into execution. I hope that *qui dedit velle dabit et perficere*—that He who gave the desire will grant too the performance, and so, turning in my prayers, such as they are, to God, that He may give you grace, I end by commending myself *in Domino ex corde* to Your Lordship.

Aloysius's letters then have to be judged by these that survive. They make a singular impression on me. Absolutely lacking in imagination, correct in their ' social ' phrasing, so to call it, and even in their religious formulas, they certainly have no ' trimmings,' any more than his conversation had. But they are better than negative, to my feeling. They seem true to the man whose Yes was Yes ; No, No. He goes straight to his point and says exactly what he means to. This does not imply that they are very limpid in style. His meditation on the angels is far more so. His sentences are interminable, each clause being linked to the preceding one by a relative. ' I commend you to God, who may He grant you that peace which as He gives it to those that trust Him so may you deserve it.' . . . I am told that this is no more than the epistolary style of the day. Certainly he took no care at all of style. If he uses a word at all special in character, he is sure to re-use it in almost the next line. But

first, when you think of the Aloysius whom the rest of his 'Life' presents to us, you feel in a different world, till you explain him to yourself, as he should indeed be explained, as a man leading a quite amazingly personal life of deliberate choice. There was as little 'fever' about his penances, his prayers, as there is in the letters. He had formed his view as to how he should behave, and carried out his intention with regularity and decision. Moreover, he did what he said ought to be done—kept his innermost life secret. Other people saw only the exterior manifestations of an interior process—and often what they saw must have borne no more relation to it, than the hedges by the side of roads, or even the kerb-stones, or a bridge, or a tunnel, do to the irresistible, ever-varying forces of nature. Even when Aloysius explained his motives or arguments, his explanation was but a map. But now and again you suddenly get a glimpse of that 'sanguine, vivid, active' temperament which one acquaintance and witness says was that of his body; only, you see it less in that amazing physical resistance and resiliency that were his, than, it seems to me, in his spiritual temperament. The vivacity that you catch in his earliest letters survives in the later ones, and assuredly reveals itself in the famous letter to his brother from Milan, where the steel simply flashes and grinds as you read: do you see even an austere humour, as of one smiling with firm lips, in the second letter about those 'preventive medicines' to which he alludes instead of too continuously underlining the Sacraments that he wanted Rodolfo consistently to use? You will recall that Rodolfo had written to Aloysius under the shock of surprise due to his feeling physically better after going to confession and Communion! You see, without any doubt at all, his intense devotion to his mother again and again, and his letter to Guelfucci is alive throughout with good warm friendliness; and I seem to feel, here and there, in his meditation on the Angels, an almost naïve, childlike happiness in his preoccupation with such beautiful, pure, unharassed, mighty beings as they are: and again without any doubt you see, in his last letters to his mother, the almost unveiled glow

of the divine love and joy. These have still to be quoted. But if, hitherto, his heart has shone forth once and again as the fierce glow may shine forth across the grating of some furnace, or if his eyes have blazed black as through the bars of an iron vizor, in those letters and especially the last, heaven itself seems to be shining, since it had drawn now so very near. No one ought to rest, till the letters of St. Aloysius cease to strike him (as they forthwith must do) as merely altogether without *gush*; as stiff, or commonplace, or even common-sense: still less must they, or any of his life, be allowed to seem as though they 'dragged religion in,' as they say. They were the outermost expression, firm, clear-cut, simple, unpretentious, of an interior life never deliberately unveiled: if they make you guess why people thought reasonably enough that he would some day be General, to me they reveal him as already, in spirit, very royal.¹

It seems to me that during these few months we can reach, as not before, the real St. Aloysius. Hitherto it has been our duty to pile up details concerning the world he lived in, lest we should miss the man as he appeared, and as, in those circumstances, he was. But to watch a man in relation to other things, even when by force of personality and of grace, he is triumphing over them, is to watch something different from the man's inmost self. You see what he did, and how and why he did it, but you are not seeing the man just in himself, and in freedom. Now, I think you have the right to hold that you see Aloysius. At Milan, as I said, he experienced the conviction that he was not long to remain within this narrow strip of life that earth is. He felt that his work was somehow finished: he said: 'I have buried my dead.' If he had still to own to a country, Rome was that country. He had had his final test: he had been taken away from the place of his choice and plunged back more completely into that old world

¹ The general Gonzaga-Castiglione correspondence in the Archives is said to be mainly coloured by violence and 'fraternal hate.' A few pure souls, like Aloysius's three nieces, *ret. red.* It is really astonishing how often the word 'consolation' occurs in Aloysius's own letters, and in fact in those of the period. Certainly, people needed it.

than ever, since this time he went frankly as the one whose advice was to be given and accepted, on an enterprise of diplomacy wherein the head of his branch, and the head of his whole clan, and personages more powerful than either, were to profess, at least, submission to Aloysius. He had returned thence to the life that he had chosen, because having once chosen it for reasons that were eternal, he could yield to nothing that was less.

The struggle, then, was over once for all. No longer the lonely tortured boy, grim and scarred with his battling across the poisoned flowers, that changed angrily into a steely barbed entanglement when they saw themselves disdained : no longer the lad who, over the sharp flints of the heart-breaking labyrinthine way, had had to pursue his path, head down, teeth desperately biting lip, eyes blinded with the dust, the brain in agony. Not even the youth confronted with searching problems—whether or no, by staying, he would be loving father and mother more than Christ—whether, by going, he would be violating respect and duty, to parents, to vassals, to the vision, so earnestly placed before him, of the ‘ ideal despot.’ I will go further : he was no more the Aloysius fighting against tradition, surroundings, and a whole temperament, for the great virtues of the Christian life. He had not now to be twisting the bent iron. He would not forget sin—none must do that—but it was not now on his own faults nor even his tendencies to fault, on which he must dwell. He had not now to search after a probing purity, the rinsing out of taint from the ultimate fibres of his soul. He scarcely had to fear : fear, a wise man has said, may lead a man to penitence, but will never establish him in innocence. Aloysius had passed into that ardent whiteness of soul wherein he hardly had to loathe what was base, so truly did he love : the perfect love not only ‘ cast out fear,’ but had brought about almost the inability to attend to, to notice or remember, what was alien to it. He had not to defy the world, any more, when he wished to speak, and to speak truth. His mind, so lucid and sincere even in what concerned the deep things of human reasoning,

was quite clear and at its ease both with regard to things around him, and himself. 'Humility,' he had once said quite simply, 'does not grow in our garden.' By an eye kept rigidly upon truth, by words that were a truthful Yes or No, he could now live peacefully in his divine perspective, never again appalled by the sight of imperfection in himself, nor exalted by his qualities as though they were his making, but seeing all things in their origin, and relation, and their end, that is, in God : his mind was 'light from Light.'

I will go further still, and say that here was no more the Aloysius who needed, at cost of agony, to train his soul's eye to endure that Sun. He had always sought his sanctity from God, and not from human effort, however titanic his human effort indeed had been. But now you will see him rest, in peace, upon those great Attributes of God, by which our weak mind must necessarily picture to itself the Infinite and the One. And of these, the Holiness of God was that to which he felt himself most drawn : he had become affine to God's Holiness ! What more can be said ? His feet stood on the stainless sea that separates even the cleansed soul from the Godhead : and yet, the Apocalyptic sea somehow does not separate—is it of that sea too that St. John tells us that 'the sea shall be no more' ? The soul never may *be* God : least of all, while sin defiles it, can even approach be made. Enough to say, that the soul of Aloysius appears to me now to be itself like a profound and tideless sea, on which, and into which, utterly throughout which, the Light of God shines flawlessly. The soul of a Stanislaus is to me like a fountain—a delicate strong jet rising into the sunshine, playing in a thousand curves, prismatic in that one light : in both him and Aloysius all God's grace was shining—if difference must be sought for, let it be assigned as that between the fountain and the deep.

When then a soul has passed beyond the myriad needs and incidents that have composed its pilgrimage, how can description be any more possible ? Possible it is not. You will find men, of necessity, calling Aloysius 'dead to human things.' Himself, he said that they were dead, human-

wise, to him. Again and again we must send back our minds to St. John and to St. Paul, men filled with the charity of God and the fellowship of His Spirit, to see what they mean by 'death.' Only when loved away from God, a would-be world-in-itself, is the world dead and to be died to. Once it is seen as travelling towards Christ, straining to him, and doing so because Christ, being lifted high, is drawing all things to Himself, it can, and must, be loved, along with His love who loves it. But then, with what a love ! And with a love how human, how warm, how incarnate ! And we have not to see in Aloysius a man in love only with abstractions, de-humanized, un-Christlike.

The love of Aloysius for our Lord began, almost inevitably, by the love for the Cross. Nothing short of the Passion would, most of the time, have served him. He needed it, both for inspiration, and for force. Not only he had to die away from his world, but he had to kill himself out of it. He had to be a judge against himself who never could wash his hands : he had to be the carpenter of his cross : lift it on to his shoulders when men tried to wrest it from him ; carry it through deserted ways, or through throngs who, they too, were rivals to remove it. And finally, he had to nail his will to his vocation, that he might stay true to it till death, now drawn so near. But the soul of all this was, once more, love, and when we see how this last part of his life especially is dominated by Communion, 'what further need have we of witnesses ?' In each week, the last three days were his preparation for the Sunday : the first three of each week, its thanksgiving. On the Saturday, men tried to walk, at recreation, in his company, and to talk about the morrow, so did he hearten them. Men knew, by a sort of instinct, that he now was what God had willed him to become. His personal 'eccentricities' revealed themselves as 'natural' in him—even when he became lost in his vision, when he stopped in his walk or talk, even when he knelt suddenly in some corridor. There was no criticism. They were wise to know that the Communion had indeed been established : between a soul

and the All-Holy God, through His Son made man and dying on a Cross, and meeting His fellow-men in His appointed Sacrament, and in those all-but sacraments that men are. And the ecstatic Saint went lifting men sick in bed, washing their sores, gladdening Christ's heart.

All this has been too much talking. Catholics remember that 'God is always God,' and that when God has His way with a soul, it is for us humbly and gratefully to accept what He makes of it, and get into touch with it, and indeed I know no way of 'proving' to anyone what in these last pages I have said, save by engaging them to ask the Saint to reveal himself to them, and help them to recognize Christ in him, and to derive Christ and His Spirit from him.

CHAPTER IV

FLUMEN IN FONTEM

*Ad perennis vitae fontem
Mens sitiuit arida ;
Claustra carnis praesto frangi
Clausula quærit anima—
Gliscit, ambit, eluctatur
Exul frui patria.*

St. Peter Damian.

THE year 1591 opened disastrously for Italy. Scarcity had become famine, and famine bred the plague. From the blackened country districts, pitiable caravans of starving peasants poured into Rome, already congested with its own population, that festered in its tortuous streets. The hospitals were overflowing : prints and other documents picture them for us—low and stifling wards, with beds sometimes behind curtains, sometimes mere mats upon the floor. Add to the uncontrolled temperament of the sufferers their frightful overcrowding, the collapse of such organization as there then could be, and delirium, and Fr. Fabrini does not understate the horror of the situation when he speaks of the terror inspired by the sight of a number of dying men going about the hospitals naked, and falling down dead in some corner of the stairs, and how the reek made him feel himself in Purgatory, already, and how the day itself was not long enough for hearing all the confessions.

The Jesuits had had from the outset the tradition of serving the plague-stricken when occasion arose : Claudius Acquaviva, the General, himself did so now, and succeeded in opening yet another hospital. Even that was insufficient : men were dying not in hospitals alone, but in the streets. Aloysius at first concentrated on seeking alms for this : Cepari relates one visit that stood out from the others—it was to Prince

John de' Medici, with whom, in a boyhood now so distant, he had run races, among barking dogs, down the great avenues of the Boboli. Now it was a very different Aloysius, in his patched cassock, that came to ask favours from the exalted youth. He met Don John, as a matter of fact, in the street ; the prince did not at once give Aloysius what he asked for ; but he had received a shock : he did not forget, and was generous with his alms.¹

But alms-collecting seemed a petty business to one who could remember Borromeo. And to many a soul, occupied hitherto with the serving of Christ as it were within the mind alone, there is a special joy in taking quite literally the suggestion of the gospel, and being grateful quite simply to serve Christ in the sick, the hungry and the poor. Aloysius asked at once to be allowed to work in the hospitals themselves. I do not suppose that for one moment he, who had put behind him mere money and mere rank, even began to think that he might be hazarding a future of influence, or learning, or any wider work. His superiors thought of that, and were reluctant to give him leave. Still, they gave it ; and one, Tiberio Bondi, a Genoese, who was warned not to do this or that, for fear of the infection, replied that it was out of the question for him to shirk, so long as his work lay in the company of Aloysius, who was undeterred by anything. Indeed, the change in Bondi himself was so marked, as to call forth the rather naïf comment and congratulation of Cepari. As a matter of fact, the first of the many who took the contagion and died, was Tiberio. 'I would willingly change places with him,' said Aloysius, and added, 'for I think I am now in God's grace. Later, who knows what it may be. I would be glad to die.' Death certainly frightened him not at all. He must by now have been much weaker. Still, he had reserves ; and summoning these with his tremendous will, he would

¹ I think this episode should be put later ; the Bollandists show that Aloysius kept begging Fabrini to give him leave to visit Don John in his patched habit, and that Fabrini constantly refused. Aloysius went off and got leave from the Provincial, though telling him of the refusal. But he was not in Fabrini's charge till later.

carry men on his shoulders to the hospitals, undress them and put them in their beds, wash and feed them, going white and sick at first with the spectacle and the reek of the illness, but surmounting also that. The priest, Fabrini, who went to give the last sacraments to those whom Aloysius had prepared, noticed that the most repulsive cases were those to which he most attached himself. He could not, said the priest, tear himself from their side. In fact, he was obsessed by this will to work. To Bellarmine he said—was it with half a smile? —‘I believe my days are few. I feel such an extraordinary desire to work and to serve God, I feel it so passionately, that I cannot believe that God would have given it to me if He did not mean to take me away at once.’ Did he think that God really was still testing him in renunciation of his will? or did he even now think of heaven as not only a perfect rest in the union of soul with God, but as the state in which he would be able to do, and was meant to do, ten thousand times more, and ten thousand times better, than he could on earth, where our actions are, after all, little more than symbols of the response we fain would offer God?

Meanwhile, in February Aloysius wrote to his mother his thanks for her continual assistance by gifts of clothing for the destitute of Rome:

The Peace of Christ. It was a great consolation for me to be made distributor of the things for these our poor brothers: may our Lord God, who does not leave without reward those who act charitably, give you generous recompense and prize in the heavenly country for which I seem now to sigh more and more and that by His grace He will grant to us, and that quickly; for I feel that now *dies mei abbreviabuntur*—my days will be shortened. God give you every joy, and I kiss your hands. Rome, February 23, 1591.

His superiors suddenly took fright. Too many of the young Jesuits were falling ill. He was forbidden to go to hospitals, and this was terrible to him. One day he fainted,

and came to in the presence of the Rector. The moment he opened his eyes he asked leave to go to visit the sick in the Jesuits' hospital. The Rector smiled, and put Aloysius in charge of Fr. Fabrini, in all that concerned his health, and in fact they let him go to the Consolazione, because contagious patients were not, as a rule, admitted there. As though to smile at these precautions, Heaven permitted that Aloysius should instantly fall sick. He had lifted a man out of bed and attended to him and put him back again. The man was after all infectious, and Aloysius was attacked as the others had been, and went to bed on March 3rd, 1591. Joy so possessed him at the thought of death, that seemed certain, that he asked Bellarmine if even in this there might be selfishness. The theologian gently pacified him, and thereafter the illness increased with appalling rapidity, and after a week he received the last sacraments from the Rector, the room being full of the community in great distress. Men had constantly rebuked him for the hard life he imposed upon himself: they said it would shorten his days. Now that fear seemed realized: did some one of them express this? Perhaps it was so, for after receiving Communion Aloysius roused himself, and begged the Rector to assure them that his life of penance gave him now no scruple, that he ought to have done more, and asked for more, and that of what he had done, none had been done without permission nor of his own will, and that what might have appeared unusual had involved no disobedience and had not, he trusted, scandalized them.

But they had put penance back into his head, and when the Provincial, Fr. Carminata, a great friend of Bellarmine's, came into the room, Aloysius begged to be allowed once more to take the discipline. Carminata refused, saying he was far too weak. Could not, the sick man persisted, the Fr. Minister come to his help herein? The Provincial smiled: 'That,' said he, 'would make him "irregular." . . . For Canon Law does not permit clerics to strike one another.' Aloysius, sure that he was dying, and that his death would take place

on the anniversary of his birthday, begged the favour, to ask, which seems to come natural to the Saints—to be placed upon the floor to die. Between now and the end, Aloysius was indeed not to detach his thought from the Crucifix, and it seemed intolerable to him that he, a sinner, should die softly when Christ's cross had been so hard. But this too they refused.

Meanwhile, there was a space of seeming convalescence. Immediately, he made a vow that should he stand up again, he would return at once to the service of those plague-stricken. But his mother and Rodolfo were nearer the truth when they heard that he had actually died, and had ordered a solemn dirge for him, than when news came of his recovery, and Rodolfo impulsively broke to pieces the gold chain he was wearing and flung the fragments to the populace in gratitude. For though the infection passed, he could not rally. A slow fever and a cough exhausted him, and for three months yet he continued to live, wasting day by day. His constitution must have been marvellous: but besides the shock of the illness, his mind was divided: he could not whole-heartedly bid himself recover. If the sick men beckoned from the hospitals, God's summons was the more insistent. So had St. Paul found himself 'gripped this side and that, and ah, how to choose, I know not.' But the Apostle was needed still on earth: Aloysius had all but finished the work that God had given him to do.

The test of being visited began. A sick man is often genuinely grateful to a visitor whose visit none the less exhausts him. He will be far too considerate to refuse to see him, so long as he can possibly avoid doing so. In Aloysius's day, it would have been extremely difficult to refuse a Cardinal, and Cardinal della Rovere and Cardinal Scipio Gonzaga were continually at his bedside: the Rector, it is true, begged them not to put themselves out to come, for bulletins should be sent to them. Yet even this could not shield the tired man, for the Cardinals insisted they came not for his sake, but for theirs. Scipio indeed had to be carried to the room, being a

victim to gout : Aloysius on his side was grateful to him : he said he considered him his father and greatest benefactor, since without his help he could never have entered religion. The old man, suddenly penetrated by the nearness of undoubted sanctity, broke into tears, and confessed that it was he who had found in the boy his spiritual guide and a father. ' I take away from that room,' he said to someone, ' a heart full of joy, but a mozetta wet with tears.' And he insisted on the peace that spread wide in his own heart, after Aloysius had talked to him about his nearing death and the goodness of God who summoned him thus so soon. ' He is the happiest man,' said the Cardinal, ' of all the Gonzagas.'

There is a real charm in the affection felt for Aloysius by quite old men. In the same house was an aged priest, Ludovico Corbinelli, who had begun his religious life as a fellow-novice of the St. Stanislaus, and now asked nothing better than to end it in the company of Aloysius. He was dying, in fact, and the two sent daily messages to one another. About a week before the old man's death, he felt he could not tolerate not seeing yet once more him whom he held to be a Saint. He implored the infirmarian to carry Aloysius to his room. The infirmarian therefore carried him there in his arms, and the two remained long together. At last, Corbinelli, sure that he would see his friend no more, asked him to give him his benediction. Aloysius, astonished, and feeling it wholly inappropriate that one not a priest, and so much younger, should bless the old man, begged that it might be he who should receive the blessing, not give it. Corbinelli, became distressed and agitated, as old men will, and the infirmarian took his part. Aloysius yielded, yet so as to save his sense of what was right. He signed the Cross upon himself, and said : ' May God our Lord bless us both.' Then he took holy water from the infirmarian, offered it to Corbinelli, and said : ' Father, may God our Lord fill you with His holy grace, and grant all your desires, for the glory of His name. And ask, please, the same for me.' Then he was carried back.

Corbinelli began to beg that he might be buried in the

same grave as Aloysius, and on the very day of his death Aloysius on his side, asked that he might be buried with Fr. Corbinelli, who by then was dead. He even alleged what occurred on the night of the old man's death. During that night, that of June 1st, Aloysius three times saw Corbinelli, and when the infirmarian came to see him in the morning, he said that he had had a very bad night and had constantly been troubled by dreams. Thrice had he seen Corbinelli, in great distress. The first time, he had asked Aloysius to pray for him at that moment, for he needed patience and strength for the perilous crisis he was about to endure. Without the special grace of God he would not have courage to bear it as he should. Aloysius awoke, and told himself that it was nonsense, and to go to sleep again. The second time, Corbinelli asked even more earnestly for prayers, because his pain was almost more than he could bear. It had been kept from Aloysius that his friend was dying, and he merely rebuked himself for not sleeping, as his superiors had told him to try to do. He would ask a penance for it in the morning. But just as he was falling asleep, he saw Corbinelli the third time, and he said: 'My very dear brother, I am come to the last point of this wretched life. Pray that God may receive me in mercy, and I will pray for you.' This time Aloysius woke up thoroughly, and could sleep no more. The infirmarian assured him that Corbinelli was quite well: but the young man had no doubt on the subject, and when Bellarmine came to see him and asked what he thought of Corbinelli's destiny, Aloysius answered with great conviction that he could but have 'passed through purgatory.' Bellarmine was astonished: the statement was very positive, and Aloysius was always careful of what he affirmed. After this, Aloysius refused altogether to pray for his recovery, even for the sake of work. '*Melius est dissolvi*': 'Better to die,' was all he would answer.

In the early days of his illness Aloysius had written, or dictated, a long letter to his mother, full of his characteristic tenderness.

Most Illustrious Lady Mother,

The Peace of Christ. For a considerable while I have had a motive—and time—to satisfy Your Ladyship's desire for news of me, and I do so now all the more willingly as I have the opportunity of assuredly consoling you, and I do not know how better to do it than by praying you to look to that Mother who had none to equal her in her sufferings; and also look at her dear Son, our Lord, who took to Himself all our pains and labours and even death, to encourage us to patience in our ills and to give us eternal salvation. Your Ladyship's sorrows are many and severe, but they cannot last long, because if we receive all with holy resignation from the Hand of His Divine Majesty, we shall arrive quickly and with safety to the land of promise. Comfort yourself too with the most holy Virgin Mary, and rest in her. I see that I too find myself now at the end of my sufferings and, if it pleases His Divine Majesty, I hope to receive from the same Lord the greatest grace that I could ever receive, that is, to die as I hoped in His grace—and I had already received viaticum and extreme unction: however it pleased the Lord to defer it, disposing for me meanwhile a slow fever which I still have. The doctors do not know how it will finish and are trying to find remedies for my bodily health: but I find joy in thinking that God our Lord wishes to give me a more perfect health than what the doctors can give, and so things are going very cheerfully for me, with the hope of being called by God our Lord in a few months from the land of the dead to that of the living and from the society of the men of this earth to that of the angels and the saints of heaven, and in fine from the sight of these earthly and transitory things to the vision and contemplation of God who has all good things. This can too be a cause of comfort to Your Most Illustrious Ladyship, because you love me and wish me well: I beg you to pray for me and to make the Brothers of Christian Doctrine pray for me so that in this short time that remains for me to sail on the seas of this world,

God our Lord may deign, by the intercession of His Only-Begotten Son, of His most holy Mother, and of the Saints Nazarius and Celsus, to plunge into the Red Sea of His Passion my imperfections, so that freed from my enemies I may go to the land of promise to see and rejoice in God—and may He give you comfort. Amen. Rome, April 5, 1591. Your most obedient son in Christ, Aluigi Gonzaga, of the Society of Jesus.

We cannot tell whether the Marchioness had herself been ill, or whether her distress was arising from Don Rodolfo yet once more ; but perhaps the poor lady, very lonely in her castle, found her heart breaking just because she could not be with the son of her great love whom she was never more to see. You can picture with what tears she arranged the only gifts he could take from her—the clothes and alms she had been sending ; for the sick, no doubt, but very much for her boy through whose hands her gifts would reach them. Soon, not even those parcels would she be tying up ; and, with Aloysius gone, she did not feel, I think, that very much was left to her. However, another letter reached her, which was, indeed, the last one. He already knew the day on which he should die.

Most Illustrious and most honoured Mother in our Lord,
The Peace of Christ.

May the grace and consolation of the Holy Spirit be always with Your Most Illustrious Ladyship. Your Ladyship's letter found me still living in this world of death but I am very soon going to praise God for ever in the land of the living. I thought by now to have made already that last passage, but, the violence of the fever (as I told you in my last letter) abated in its main course and fierceness, and has brought me quietly to the glorious feast of the Ascension. Since then, because of a great concentration of catarrh in my chest, it has increased, so that quite gradually I am on my way to the dear and sweet embrace of the Heavenly Father, on whose breast I hope to be able

to rest, in security, and for ever. And so the various pieces of news that have come from various quarters about me, all agree, as I have also written to my Lord Marquis. Now if charity, as St. Paul says, makes us weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who are joyful, great must be the joy of Your Ladyship, Lady Mother, for the grace that God does you in my person, God our Lord leading me to the true joy and assuring me that I shall no more have to lose it. I confess to Your Most Illustrious Ladyship that I am bewildered and lose myself at the thought of the divine goodness, a sea without shore and fathomless, of God who calls me to an eternal rest after such short and tiny labours—summons and calls me to heaven, to that supreme Good that I sought so negligently, and promises me the fruit of those tears that I sowed so sparingly. Take care, take care, dear Mother, to do no injury to that infinite Goodness, as it would be, without doubt, to grieve for, as dead, one who must now live before God to help you by his prayers far more than he could do on earth. Not long will last that separation: there we shall see one another again and be happy without ever growing tired, united together with our Redeemer, praising Him with all our strength, and singing for ever His mercies. I do not at all doubt that, leaving aside all that the reasoning of human nature says, we shall easily open the door to faith and to that simple and pure obedience to which we are held by God, offering Him freely and promptly that which is His, and all the more willingly the dearer to you is the thing that He takes from you, believing firmly that what God does, is all of it well done, taking away what He first had given us, and for no other reason than to put it in a safe and sure place, and to give to it what we all desire for ourselves. I have said all this for no other reason than to satisfy the desire I have that Your Most Illustrious Ladyship and all my family may receive this my departure as a dear gift, and that you may accompany me and help me with your Mother's blessing to pass this gulf and reach the

shore of all my hopes. I have done it with all the better will because I have nothing else left with which to give you some little proof of the love and filial reverence that I owe you. I end by asking once more very humbly for your blessing. From Rome, June 10, 1591. Your Most Illustrious Ladyship's most obedient son in Christ, Aluigi Gonzaga.

I confess that while at any time it is a profoundly moving thing to read a letter actually written by one we know to have been a Saint, this letter reaches the soul with especial intimacy. For Saints who wrote many letters, like Francis de Sales, or quite modern Saints whose correspondence was easier, and kept in its entirety, wrote while they were still in the midst of the effort of life, and we do not know whether yet the union of their soul with God had been accomplished. This letter was dictated by one who had but the minimum of earthly purgatory left to endure, and who, wise men felt, would need no other-worldly one. Aloysius was all-but seeing God. Hence through the stately courtesy of the style, proper to his days, and the phrases in which nothing, so to say, was novel or peculiar to himself, we cannot fail, indeed, to discern extreme tenderness of affection, but we are bound to recognize as truly holy, truly in touch with heaven, that calm of spirit and that profound content which are no less discernible. It is no slight thing to hear a Saint say, with such serene simplicity that he is lost in the wonderment of God, of God's goodness, and God's goodness to himself. I know no better document for proving that joy goes well with pain, for he was throughout, in very severe pain, but, that perhaps it is in pain that such joy grows perfected. Here, I repeat, is the vision of that deep sea of his soul, unruffled, without tides, wherein the Light of God could spread itself and repose, without fleck or flaw to sully it.

Naturally, when it had become so clear that death was at hand, the Saint wished so far as might be to possess nothing and to be surrounded by nothing that earth might minister. Even the curtaining of his bed seemed extra to him: other

beds lacked it. They told him that the drapery had not been put there for him, and that after all, it was very rough and coarse. They put, pathetically, little sweets, and liquorice beside him for his cough. The sweets seemed too like a delicacy, and he took the other. He had lent himself pleasantly, in life, to ordinary conversation : now, he found it difficult to attend to it, while his face lit up if they talked to him of God, and he thought that he was not asking too much if he showed preference for what now alone could hold him. So long as he could get up at all, he asked now and again for his clothes, and went slowly to the table on which was a crucifix, and this he used to lift and kiss, and would go the round of the Saints whose pictures were on the walls. 'Do not trouble to do that,' said the infirmarian. 'I would have brought them to you.' 'These,' he answered, smiling, 'are my Stations.' They counted to him for those great Roman churches he had loved to visit and was to see no more. It irked him, none the less, to be lying soft, and worshipping God too, he felt, disrespectfully ; he felt the need of kneeling, and would slip out of bed, prop himself up between it and the wall, and so pray, and thus he did till he was stopped by the infirmarian. In his anxiety for God, he asked Bellarmine, one evening, if he thought any soul might pass straight to heaven without Purgatory. Bellarmine answered that he did, 'and,' with trustful daring, he added, 'I think you will be one of them.' At the thought of this swift home-coming, the Saint sank then into an ecstasy : the night abbreviated itself for him into a moment of God's gladness, and when he returned to himself, he knew that it was on the Octave day of Corpus Christi that he should die. This he told to many of his friends, and in particular to his very special friend, Antonio Guelfucci, who was constantly with him.

As that Feast approached, his illness became rapidly worse, and he was officially told he could not recover. 'Do you know the good news I have had ?' he said to a visitor. 'Say the *Te Deum* with me.' 'We are going,' he said to another, 'and gladly, gladly.' He asked to have letters written

to his novice-master, then rector at Naples, and to a professor of theology there, and to the rector of Milan. Unable to write them himself, or even to sign them, he asked Guelfucci to hold his hand, and he put a cross at the foot of each, to replace his name. The visits redoubled. All were determined to ensure his prayers for them in Heaven. With the gentle patience that had subsisted throughout his illness, even in the worst hours, he accepted all, spoke cheerfully to all, seemed, one of them said, as though to go to Heaven were but to pass from one room into another. It seemed to them that Aloysius might worthily be canonized even while yet alive.

Time passed ; and in his rapid loss of strength his mind, at last, found itself no more its own master, as of old, and required to be helped in order to concentrate. At any rate he asked Guelfucci to let no day go by without coming to help him pray. Guelfucci used to place a crucifix on the bed, kneel beside it, and say very slowly the Penitential Psalms. At moments when the Saint's face was transfigured, or tears ran down it, the young man would pause, and at times weep bitterly himself. At other hours, Aloysius asked to be read to—passages from the *Psychagogia*, the *Soliloquies* of St. Augustine, St. Bernard's writings on the *Canticle*, and a hymn he loved—'Ad perennis vite fontem'—and again, and above all, the Psalms : 'I rejoiced, when they said to me : We will go into the House of the Lord,' and 'Even as the hart pants after the water-springs, so panteth my soul towards Thee, O my God.'

In the hours of exhaustion that intervened, the bells of Rome came quietly up into the sick room. We at least can allow our memory to mingle with them the bells of all those many towns in which the young man had lived, and particularly, the bells of Florence, that had floated up to Fiesole, and those of the little churches of Castiglione. On to the white-washed walls of this infirmary, falls for us the reflection of the gold ceilings, the painted panellings, the marble and the mirrors of distant palaces, and the flash of a forgotten sword-hilt and of jewelled chains, ruffs, plumed caps, and the shimmer

of silk. Perhaps in the hours when God was not Himself putting new visions into the soul of Aloysius, while his brain was too tired to accept such thoughts as his mind had sought to entertain, perhaps that mind, working backwards, showed him himself in that flamboyant life, Mantua, Madrid; and he heard echoes of Rodolfo's shouting, and the petulant Prince of Spain. All know how such visions form, fall asunder, and re-form in hours of deep weariness. At least they could never show him playing false: there had been no secrets, no disloyalties. The incredible struggle had long ago been over: even the restlessness of fever was surely not suffered now to reproduce it: even the high uncharted hopes of remote mission-work, of masculine enterprise to be carried through among like-hearted men, must just then have seemed as distant as the courts, as the camps. The dying very easily let go of things, and it was not of these things that Aloysius ever had kept hold. I like to hope that the visions that recurred were of those pictures of Mary that had kept pace with his choices; and that when he said her name, from the incredible depths of childhood came back his mother's voice that taught it to him, and that the crucifix he continually looked at, led his dreaming back, through the charcoal crosses he had drawn upon the walls of inns where for a night he rested, to that which he had loved at home, and that his father held when dying. Half-worldly sentiment may such dreaming be, in us who permit it: nor can we tell at all what passed in the long hours of the Saint's solitary dying. But such, after all, had been his life: to us at any rate it may be forgiven if we recall the many colours and the many voices, and the one eternal thing that had seemed to efface and to silence them and that was now so present in its power that the whole focus of God, if I dare speak so, was in Rome then Aloysius; a Light so intense, and a Word so penetrating, that neither ear nor eye could catch them. Yet, as we kneel in spirit beside that bed, we cannot fail to be aware at least of this, that neither eye nor ear need anything else, after the briefest space, for their lessoning.

Three days before his death, Aloysius had had a Crucifix with a 'Philippine indulgence' annexed to it, hanging round his neck. Guelfucci had given him this. On the wall beside him hung another crucifix, and, since he lay nearly always on his right side, he kept his eyes on this, holding the other in his left hand. He said often during this time: 'I long to be dissolved and to be with Christ.'

When the Octave day of Corpus Christi dawned, June 20th, 1591, the infirmarian found Aloysius as usual, and said: 'Well, you are still here!' But he insisted he would die that day. Another who visited him, found him better, though in great pain from sores which had formed on his right side, for during his illness he had grown very thin, and lay almost always thus. The visitor commented on his strength. 'To-day is not yet over,' said Aloysius. The priest insisted that he did not seem near death. 'I shall die to-night: I shall die to-night,' repeated he. His mind was none the less alert. A priest who had some days before recommended to his prayers a young nobleman who wished to enter the religious life, and feared opposition, returned to see him: Aloysius showed he had not forgotten the request, and it was now that he asked to be buried along with Father Corbinelli. At dawn he had asked for the Viaticum: at midday he reiterated his entreaties: the infirmarian said he had already received it once, and could not do so twice in the course of the same illness. 'Extreme Unction, no: but Viaticum, yes,' he replied: but even so, he seemed so well that they would not give it to him. Soon after this, the Pope, who had heard of his illness, sent him his special blessing and indulgence: this covered the young man with confusion; but it could be explained to him that of course the Pope had heard, through the Gonzaga Cardinal, how ill he was, and had sent the blessing naturally. About six, a fellow-novice from Sant' Andrea came to see him. At once Aloysius implored him to persuade the rector to bring him the Viaticum, and while waiting for it, he recited with this visitor the Litany of the Blessed Sacrament. Soon therefore the little bell was heard,

and our Lord came to the room of His servant to ensure him His companionship during the last hours. One by one, after he had received Communion, those present came to bid him his good-bye. His very dear friend, Gaspar Alpieri, begged him with special earnestness to remember him in the Beatific Vision that he hoped he would so soon enjoy. Aloysius said that he trusted through God's infinite mercy, and the Blood of His Son, and the prayers of His blessed Mother, to be swiftly in his heaven, and added: 'Be sure I shall not forget you. I have loved you on earth, but how much better shall I love you there, where charity is made perfect.' He was, indeed speaking so easily that none could believe he was dying. The Provincial came to see him, asked how he was, and—'We are off, Father Provincial!' Aloysius answered. 'Off? Where?' 'To heaven, if my sins do not stop me.' 'Hark at this young man,' whispered the Provincial as he turned away. 'He talks of going to heaven as we should of going to Frascati.' And again it seemed to them that they should not bury him where ordinary men were laid.

In Rome, when evening falls, the air changes suddenly and grows chill, and they placed a cap on the dying man's head. A priest was at the moment lifting Aloysius's head up a little to help him to see the crucifix that he was holding. Aloysius put his hand up and tried to take the cap away. The priest, thinking this to be the anxiety of a dying man, replaced it. Soon Aloysius again tried to take it off. 'Leave it,' said the priest. '*He* died,' said the Saint, 'with nothing on His head.' And indeed, throughout his life, he had found that Christ's sacrifice alone was great enough to steel him to make his own: and now that he was dying, his mind having received that bent, he found he did not wish to have the small comfort that Christ, upon His Cross, did not have.

Shortly afterwards, they discussed who should sit up with him. Aloysius roused himself from his prayer, and said twice to Guelfucci: 'Stay with me!' And to Fr. Francis Belmisseri he insisted: 'Be sure that you stop.' But a little after nine, the Rector saw how easily Aloysius was speaking,



THE DEATH OF ST. ALOYSIUS

[Detail from Painting by Ernest Wente.

and, convinced he would not die that night, sent everyone away save four Fathers, and somewhat later, Bellarmine said to Aloysius that if he wished for the Prayers for the Departing Soul, it would have to be he who should give warning : and after a while Aloysius did so, and then Bellarmine himself was sent to bed and Aloysius was left alone with two priests and the room grew dark.

From time to time they went to look at him : [he was always awake, and praying. They returned to the shaded light, and there were long silences, save when the Saint said : ' Into Thy Hands,' and they too prayed. In the silences the bells of Rome chimed the slow quarters, and in Castiglione the clock that had been his first birthday-present struck on its little gongs while his mother prayed faithfully for her son.

Towards ten o'clock, the pain of the sores upon his side became intolerable ; and the man who, during his life had not ever asked a favour for himself, now in a weak voice said : ' Lift me a little.' They went to him ; but those, who then as ever would have done anything for him, saw that just then the change that comes into a man's face when he is dying, came upon his. They did not dare touch him, fearing the shock : and, being wise men, and knowing what he would understand, as he had ever understood it, said to him : ' Christ died nailed.' And in his face he showed that indeed he was grateful to be able to make the last few minutes still more like those of Him who could not move upon His own Cross : he gazed fixedly at the Crucifix they put into his hand : and soon, making an effort to pronounce the Name of Jesus, died,

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Aloysius therefore died between ten and eleven o'clock as the Octave day of Corpus Christi was about to pass into the Friday. He was twenty-three years old, three months, and eleven days, exactly the same age as his patron St. Louis of Toulouse, son of Charles II, King of France.

On the day after her son's death the General wrote to Donna Marta.

In this letter I shall inform Your Most Illustrious Ladyship of the happy passing from this life of Brother Luigi—ours, and yours—that occurred in the night of the Octave of Corpus Christi, with that peace and desire for heaven which was in all ways similar to the life he led, which was wholly an example. Though to the members of the Society he leaves some matter for grief, since to-day they find themselves deprived of the great treasure that they had acquired in his person in the things and actions of life, I choose rather to rejoice with Your Most Illustrious Ladyship that, for yourself and for your House, you possess, as a devout hope founded on a life and works of extreme integrity can assure us, a Brother in heaven, who by his mere memory can be to all a stimulus for the honour of God, and with the best power an intercessor for true happiness. I recall also to Your Most Illustrious Ladyship who by this member of your House, in whom for six years we have rejoiced, have made a perpetual gain for all of us, that we shall ever be most prompt to serve you, and, offering myself for this with all my heart, I pray for you from the divine Goodness all true content.

The Rector of the Roman College and Cardinal della Rovere wrote to her even more strongly, and so did many another, though their letters need not be quoted. One and all they bear witness to the universal conviction that Aloysius had entered into the glory and the peace of God. As for the young man's confessors, especially Bellarmine, who in those days considered that they had the right to attest at least the virtues of their penitents when these were dead, they emphasized their belief that never had Aloysius stained his soul by mortal sin.

CHAPTER V

CUM FRATRIBUS FRATER

When one is carefully enquiring in what the 'heroic' grade of Christian virtues consists, unless one wants to float about vaguely in the air at one's own devices, one must come down from the region of uniform and immutable ideas and place one's self among real men and watch them acting in human ways, according to the condition and time of life proper to each, nor in divorce from the special adjuncts of times, places and personal ties in which it is men's lot to live and act. They therefore desert reality who, having fashioned for themselves some vague abstract idea of the Heroic, think that this can and ought to apply to all the Servants of God equally. Were this true, one ought first to abolish all the differences that exist in men, set in them by Nature or by God the Or'gin and Artificer of Nature. Now these differences are so far from being rendered barren, deadened, or annihilated by grace, that grace actually fosters, enlivens, and develops them to perfection (so that as St. Thomas says, 'virtues make us perfect for the following out our natural inclinations in the proper way'). Clearly, then, the very foundation laid by nature is filched away, the very beauty of the Church is defaced, if a man succeeds in imagining that all the Saints should be constructed or portrayed according to one identical formula.

From a decree of the S.C.R. concerning the Cause of the V. Antonio Maria Gianelli: *A.A.S.*, 1920, p. 170.

SUCH then is the story of St. Aloysius. But I have written it, not because it is a story, but because he is a person. Aloysius is to be recognized as a man who intervenes in the life of to-day, and not as Dante or Napoleon might be said to do so—as memories merely, even though able to arouse enthusiasm and suggest action or thought—but, as taking the initiative in his intervention, and acting the more powerfully in proportion as he finds co-operation. And he is prepared to act thus especially in the case of young men.

That this is so, on the general scale, we can be sure, for the simple reason that several Popes have said that it is so, and ought to be more so, and must always be so. I cannot see that a loyal Catholic, who might be disinclined to think it is so, or even to wish it to be so, has any duty other than to alter his opinion or his wish. But I hold that experience has joined hands with authority, and it is at least clear that

Aloysius has exercised, in the past, a positive fascination over many generations of young men. Were I tempted to listen to the suggestion that those young men belonged to past generations and to countries other than our own, I am reduced, in honesty, to confessing that he cast just such a spell over me personally, and did so, when I needed him most, and was most unlikely to discover him—when, in short, I was looking for a faith.

But the more directly personal an influence is, the more, I think, have we to seek it in, precisely, the personality, and not in the external accidents of period or environment nor even in the details of a career. The less Aloysius is a memory merely, the more he acts personally and now, the less have we to concentrate on what, in his story, belongs to his distant century, or on what, in him, was due to his having lived precisely then and there, necessary as that is, if we are to understand his *history*.

In this epilogue, then, I may be allowed to disentangle, if I can, those essential elements in his life which show him to be a man who can notably help men of our own day when they need help. He is not in the least likely to wish to turn modern lads into renaissance youths, nor expect young men in offices, or the air force, or in the colonies to do what a sixteenth century prince-marquis had to do : but that which he *was*, and what God approved in him and crowned in him, that will he wish all who are capable of being it, to be.

A young man does not much relish advice. I do not know what he would make of the word 'patron.' Certainly he would hate to be patronized. And it is very much the fashion to declare that the best plan for anyone is to learn by experience. 'Let him alone, and he will find his level.' 'He will have,' said a schoolmaster of a new boy whom his parents were entrusting to his care, 'to go through the fire like the rest of them.' All the same, people who state that the young should be allowed to look after themselves, on the grounds that even if they stray they'll 'come home' like the sheep in the rhyme, probably say so either because they are young them-

selves and don't want to be looked after : or, sometimes, because, being elderly, they are currying a little favour from their juniors ; or, being disheartened by a task they have found thankless, resign themselves to the belief that probably everybody goes through a phase of youthful measles, mental and moral, and it can't be helped. ' They recover.' We wish they always did. After all, this is but the old story of wild oats, a dingy crop of which our Victorian great-uncles spoke with complacency provided it grew in some field not immediately under their eye. The Holy Father is very emphatic as to young men needing not only advice, but government : since however he says this in a different connection, I merely recall here that no sensible man, if he is young, expects to succeed without some help, nor, if he is older, desires young men to ' muddle through ' all by themselves. That involves far too much waste ; and nothing is sadder than the waste of splendid qualities, such as I believe almost every young man to possess, which, far far too often, we do indeed see ' come to nothing.'

It is indeed largely this waste that makes us anxious. Waste implies that there is something to be wasted. The Holy Father, looking back upon the multitude of young men whom he saw in Rome during the Holy Year, felt what marvellous possibilities were latent there. Latent, I say ; for the whole point was, that an event like a pilgrimage to Rome during a Jubilee proves nothing so far. The question was, could such lads be relied upon for the other years, and at home, nor in Rome only ? If they could, why, there was ready to hand the material of what should ' one day be a strong yet peaceful army ' that the Holy See might use ' in the reformation of a world that is hurling itself into decadence.' The Holy Father, looking forth on that world, sees Satanic snares laid for the feet of faith and innocence, so that again and again high hearts are discouraged, and ' the vigour of youth weakens and is squandered '—that virile virtue comes to naught ' which would have been able to achieve so much good for the Church and for Society.'

The Holy Father has then most definitely his eye upon that mysterious thing that we call Character. He wants Reliable Characters. And it is too often the collapse of character, or what looked like character, that we see. 'I give up. Things are too much for me. I throw my hand in. I used to hope—once. Now I see nothing to hope for. I see no point in life. Show me something worth while, and I'll do it, or try to do it. Religion? Yes—it used to appeal to me, but now it doesn't. It's faded out.' And again and again: 'I have no purpose.' As one letter put it: 'The curse of my generation is hopelessness. I think there are hundreds who could do what St. Aloysius did if only you would show them it's worth while.' You may see this not only in the well-to-do, who might be expected to find a life sufficiently insipid in which there is no need for them to put forth effort, because everything is already in their hands: but you see it in the classes whose lives are absorbed in dull work, and in those especially whose work is not only dull, but able merely to roof, clothe, and feed a man, so that he appears to work to-day in order to live to-morrow, and to live to-morrow in order to work once more. Thus the circle swings on its vicious progress.

This human collapse is of course most noticeable among others than Catholics. You have only to consult the statistics of suicide and insanity, and you will be positively startled to see how these keep pace with heresy. Yet, no real need to be startled. The human creature requires, for its proper life, to use its intelligence as it should, and its free will as it should. It cannot use its intelligence, if it possesses nothing that it holds as absolutely true: it cannot use its free will unless it has adequate motives. Now outside the Church, these exist less and less. But those Catholics who live in a world that is chiefly non-Catholic, suffer a mental infection. It is against this that we must arm our growing lads and girls, and in view of this that they must start to form their own character. More and more, outside the Church, you find it taken for granted that there is no Authority for the mind: you cannot, even if you would, find anything so guaranteed to teach you

truthfully, that you have the duty of submitting your mind to it. Hence, that 'individualism' which the Pope deplors. It is the frittering away of all society, and worse. For, when a man has no authority to which he knows he should submit his thought, he has certainly no authority to which he must submit his will. For, you should only take orders from one who has the right to give them. Hence, a man becomes his own law-giver: he settles, himself, what shall be right and wrong: and since human nature is what it is, and ever prone to find reasons for what it wants to do, a man who thinks that only to be true, which he himself consents to regard as true, soon enough regards as right only what he considers to be right, and becomes also an 'opportunist'; and since there are but few who think out any opinion whatsoever, most men will do just what suits their interest, that is, what pays, and what pleases. Hence at best they tend to become sharp business-men, and, at worst, or in the intervals, do what amuses, do what is pleasurable, do, in short, what they feel like doing, act according to the mood, the impression of the moment; are men rather of emotion and instinct than of reason and chosen self-control. This is the collapse not only of society, but of civilization, and is the disintegration even of the individual. It is scarcely my business here to show why I think that modern life, especially by means of the press, of business-methods, and of the cinema, is accelerating to an appalling degree this disintegration. I hold, anyhow, that it is doing so, all over the world, and rotting thus even those great systems, like Islam, like the civilization of China, with which we might, as Christians, in some ways disagree, but which at least held together, and held men together.

If Aloysius can help men in such a pass, he can give a help supremely needed now.

The Pope insists again and again that Character is an affair of *interior life*. But our human 'interior life' consists, precisely, of these principles and motives, clearly seen and courageously acted upon, on which I fear I insist almost *ad nauseam*. Without them, all you have is exterior reactions

to some stimulus which is usually itself exterior and anyhow material. It rather puts us to shame to see how the Holy Father takes it for granted that at least as a rule his young Catholics will be burning to fling themselves—as young Italians in fact do—into some form of ‘Catholic action,’ and that this interior life is necessary lest their activity be but ‘booming bronze and clanging cymbals,’ as St. Paul says. The Pope insists that without a strong interior life, that has consolidated itself into a true character, the Apostolate is far too dangerous a sort of life to be embarked upon. All the more would he insist that *no* sort of human life can really be lived without an interior life from which its fountains spring. Nor can it. Perhaps one of the reasons why young men are shy, so to say, of Aloysius, even when he begins to be properly understood, is that he did so definitely govern himself by his intelligence—that ‘alert intelligence,’ that prudence and mature judgment to which the Holy Father keeps reverting. We are rather apt, especially in this happy-go-lucky country, where we are terrified of ‘riding principles to death,’ to wish that a man should be a little less consciously ‘principled.’ Well, there is value in simplicity and in that kind of ‘forthrightness’ which dispenses from elaborate investigation into the theory of the action we undertake: all the same, if, as we like to think of ourselves, we act with a kind of massive rightness, plunging forward according to a rough and ready equity rather than according to an exact scheme of justice, yet our actions and even motives ought to be *able* to bear examination, and we ought not to be liable to be caught out in silliness—in selfishness, let alone in sin.

The way, valuable beyond all other ways, of making sure that we really are right ‘inside’ is, as on a score of occasions and again in what he says about St. Aloysius the Pope has declared, a periodical Retreat. ‘Our young men,’ says the Pope, ‘will be able vigorously to form for themselves a right idea of life, if from time to time they extricate themselves from the tumult of human things, and apply themselves for a determined space of days to the Spiritual Exercises, which, as

a long experience teaches us, are simply *made* for that purpose.'

How could it be otherwise? I cannot here dwell on the psychology of a retreat. But look, after all, at what a young man is! Unless he is half-alive, he comes out into a world full of new notions, new experiences: small blame to him if his perspective becomes perfectly false, at least for a time. He corrects it gradually, and then blushes to see what silly things he thought—to what trifles he attached importance. He will look back to nights when he could not sleep for very shame at having upset a cup of coffee on a lady's dress—to hours when he thought life was finished, career ruined, by some social solecism, some boorish remark he had made: he will succumb to flatteries—especially if he be treated as an adult: he will be thrilled by something that afterwards he will regard as so commonplace: he will be suddenly shy (it is one of his charms!) both of evil, and (quite as frequently) of good, or of the appearance of goodness: he will do, in a fit of recklessness, or of fear of seeming a novice, or of sulks, or of boredom, what afterwards he will curse himself for a fool for having done. And he will *despond*. Once more, do not easily say: 'That is his way of winning experience.' It may be: but it is a wasteful, a wickedly wasteful, way. He will gain plenty of experience by having principles and schooling himself to act according to them. No conceivable other way will teach him half so much about himself and about life as that way. And a retreat, like nothing else, clears the mind and braces the will. You remember how Aloysius with infinite difficulty drilled his mind, both by meditation, and retreat, lest he should fall victim to the huge illusion of his times. If it is difficult to-day, it was no less difficult then, and perhaps more difficult for him than for most: for, we waste ourselves too often in day-dreams: we picture ourselves doing, being, what we know in our hearts we never could be or do. Aloysius, if I have thought of him aright, could, not only by the tremendous 'privilege' proper to his rank, but by real force of personality have been almost anything he chose.

No doubt he began with the simplest—I do not say the easiest, but the most clear-cut duty : that of keeping the body in subordination both to mind and will. I must repeat, to his honour, that he did not experience personally the revolt of the flesh ; but that was most certainly not due to anæmia, to inertia of disposition. Suppose he had not, and heroically, corresponded with the grace of God, do you suppose he would have gone on, in his world and with his nature, keeping himself chaste ? Of course not. As I said, he would never have sunk to slime (yet who knows ? the hardest natures are apt suddenly to go to pieces, as they say, and horrify themselves by the discovery of a ‘homesickness for the mire’) ; but had this or that illicit passion come his way, would he have allowed any law of God or man to prevent him from satisfying it ? He would never have admitted the semi-scruples of Rodolfo ! I confess that I am not always sure that his times, herein, were so very much worse than ours. Still, it is fairly possible for a man, to-day, to keep out of close contact with evil in the concrete : yet, again, the very openness of vice, in Aloysius’s day, may have had a blunting effect on its attraction. To-day, unless a man lives almost wholly in his family, he cannot possibly escape a subtly rotting air : the continual sub-suggestion of club, or film, or newspaper. ‘If only I could be let alone !’ is a refrain to which I have grown accustomed. As for those working-lads, who live in factories and down the pit, and even in offices, how often they tell you in desperation that ‘nothing else is talked of.’ One sort of heroism or another is, without doubt, needed to-day, if a man would do, what most men give up as hopeless—keep his mind clean.

I do not wish to linger upon the subject of this sort of self-control : but I would recall just this—Christian purity has not to be thought of as a negative virtue. Our Lord flung His paradox down before us—He who loses his life, for Christ’s sake, is the one who finds it. Experience justifies these words in every case. It is the man who never denies his instincts what they ask for, who is dwindling day by day. The Pope,

using the picturesque word *rimpicciolire*, sees the man who merely lives for pleasure as 'whittling down' his life to almost nothing. A man makes the greatest mistake if he says—and the mistake is one so easily made in youth, when you do not know the ultimate result of things and have not had time to watch it coming about in yourself or others—if, then, he says: 'I do so and so, I know; but I cannot see that I am any less of a man than such and such an one who doesn't.' Alas, he is; or is becoming so. We curious two-fold natures—animal and angel—have those two centres of gravity, or foci of forces in us: our senses, and our souls. In proportion as we live according to the former, we become unable to use the latter. But it is in the soul that are those essentially human and humanizing facts—thought, and will. There, too, especially, all that even the world recognizes as noble, as beautiful, honourable, tender yet strong, delicate and sublime, and spiritual. In the sensualist, this higher life fades out. He will cease to know what you are talking about. He will not even care to know. Narrower and narrower has his sphere of existence become, till it has shrunk into the loneliest of selfishness, and he is incapable even of loving truly his fellow-man, and therefore, of earning love. He is almost already in his hell.

Sometimes Genius is quoted, and the sensual sins of great artists or musicians or poets. I would wish to urge that they sin, not because they are great, but because they are very sensitive and are but partially great. Had they controlled themselves, they would have been greater, and their works of art would have been greater. I hold that a great artist, a man of extreme sensitiveness and imaginativeness, who does control himself is already half a saint. Similarly, I expect that all the Saints are in some sense great artists. But I repeat, unless a genius is controlling himself, or at least habitually fighting for control, he will flare up, and die out: he will be erratic, unreliable, will not fulfil his promise. So let none ever say that, first, no one is 'quite good'—I mean, in this special department; nor, again, that if a man keeps

his life 'good,' he must be 'goody-goody': that innocence means he is anæmic, tame, has no spirit, is slow—all the other cant things that men do say about those they have perhaps no power to imitate, and of whom they nearly always are secretly jealous, until, as I said, they have sunk into a bitter content with their own small world of sensation. Amazing, that men should boast of their sins! What is easier than to sin? When does a man sin? when he yields to a temptation. What is temptation? the suggestion that this or that would pay, or would be pleasant, if I did it. But who need boast, if he does what pays and what is pleasant? who cannot, if he lets himself, yield to instincts, passions, senses, temper, imagination? But what is hard, what is the tough task assuredly, is to get a good grip on the reins, and then to drive these very restive horses to a goal approved by our intelligence and freely chosen. To be an un-blinded, un-shackled man! master of one's self, of one's life! I could almost think that Aloysius, a man so very masterful even by nature, would have loathed, even pagan-wise, to let himself slide into the moist and stifling and half-impotent world of sensuality. Flares of dazzling passion, as I said, he might have known: but the smudgy life of semi-indecencies, let alone the crawling world of lust, could never have been lived by him.

The very clear eye that Aloysius thus possessed—for the man who keeps himself in control has, I presume, a clear eye for whatever he chooses to look at, business, if he be a business man, and so for the rest—enabled him to see in proportion all things that his world contained. I do not think he ever had to make a choice between activity and inertia: he could not have borne to be inert. But he had to choose between objects for his energy. I have tried to show how, little by little, the object God intended him to aim at, became more and more distinct. There was this to be said for his world—it lived on a large scale. True, its vices were fierce: its opportunities for evil pleasures unlimited: its thirst for honours perfectly insane: its belief in the Renaissance culture still unshaken: but all this was, as I said, at least on an exuberant,

flamboyant, olympic sort of scale. Our difficulty nowadays is to get men to think of anything largely. The only large thing of recent years has been the war. While its limited but very strong stimulus endured, you saw that our generation was undoubtedly quite able to react to it. Deeds of incredible heroism were done, and the doing was taken for granted. But, the pressure once removed, life relapsed. There were no interior resources. I refuse to admit that what we see round us now is still merely a war-aftermath. Boys and girls who have no personal recollection of the war that counts, have not been brought up to acquire and possess interior assets, and necessarily spend lives doing such jobs as they are forced to—though even these they seem apt to let slip nervelessly out of their hands once they are too bored. They then escape into what is most mechanical, like motoring, or indolent, like watching cinemas, or brainless, like dancing, especially that disconnected sort of dancing, accompanied by an agitated music that anyone can see began from a desire to flog uncivilized nerves, which has substituted itself for the rhythmic or even the unsophisticatedly romping dances of pre-jazz days. Aloysius had not the slightest intention of living a life unfilled by work, and the Pope's second point is wholly that of the work that may be expected of a Christian.

I said that the Pope's letter rather makes us blush. For he seems able to assume that Catholic young men are chafing and prancing where they stand, in their desire to be unleashed for Catholic work. What they need, he suggests, is far rather check and guidance than stimulating. This brings us back to subordination. That word is positively loathed nowadays. But for a Catholic, there is no arguing. We have, as I said, to subordinate our body to our mind and will, but also, mind and will to the Truth and Law of God, revealed through Jesus Christ, and ever taught by the Catholic Church whose Head upon earth the Pope is, whose officers, in their turn, accept his orders and transmit them. Without any doubt, one of the most extraordinary things in Aloysius was his decision to take orders from Superiors ; and I do not think that however

high his ambitions were, and they were always sweepingly high, and also wide—he always thought imperially, as we used to say, only his ‘empire’ meant God’s Kingdom that this earth ought to be—I do not think, then, that he ever speculated on a time when it should be his turn to give orders, not even when they nicknamed him the Young General. Not that he found this easy : I have recalled that almost to the end his temper remained what it began by being—violent, that is, however well in control : I recall too that strange despondency that beset him in the noviciate, and the reasons that I gave as perhaps accounting for it. At the outset I have quoted what he said about his own temperament, and, that he held that not without an overwhelming grace from God could he have given up the money which meant so much worldly power. But having seen clearly that the work which money and rank made possible for him was yet not the work supremely worth the doing, he put himself hard at work of a quite different sort, and the Pope has chosen for the picture on which the last lines of his Message are written, not the surpliced acolyte, with lily and with scourge, but the lad struggling under the load of the man, victim of that plague which was so soon to claim himself.

Indeed, that character that could have been, so easily, domineering, remained dominating. I have given examples of that and need not repeat them. But what saved his work from being merely a human outlet for his intense mental and even, I should say, nervous energy, was, its complete unselfishness.

Christ came into this world, not to idle, but to work. ‘I am among you, not as one who is served, but who serves.’ Nor, assuredly, was His work one from which *He* was to make gain—unless our happiness is, as indeed it is, counted by Him as His gain. In approaching then our Christian work, selfishness has to be put behind us. We have to have, says the Pope, not only Aloysius’s ‘strength of will, vigour of character, energy in action,’ but a ‘high-hearted disregard of self.’ High-hearted, not a slinking one : not just self-distrust : but a

cheerful putting of self quite out of sight, that we may keep our gaze on Christ and on those whom for His sake we serve. You have not got to be deterred from Catholic work for fear of snubs, of criticism, even, of failure. Nor have you to continue with Catholic work just so long as you get praise, or even gratitude, or even that 'adequate recognition' that you may deserve. England, I imagine, is strewn with the corpses of good works, begun and not continued, dropped because someone considered (perhaps quite rightly) that he was not getting his due recognition, and so was huffed, took offence, and gave up. No. All that is selfish. Natural enough? Oh, granted. But it isn't the Pope who will ask you to work for Christ merely as you might work for your bread and butter, still less, as you might work for something less urgent than bread and butter—work, for example, for a sports club; a dramatic society. You will not even expect your Catholic work to be easy. Suppose our Lord asked you point blank whether you would do a piece of work for Him, would you have the nerve to answer: 'Yes, Lord, provided it's a soft job.' Of course not. Let it then be taken as admitted that a Catholic, man or woman, has a work to do in the world, and should be ambitious to do it, and eager to start upon it; and if you say that you have no idea *what* work you could put your hand to, begin by looking in your parish, and then observe what excuses you will at once give to yourself for *not* doing what you see there: and if indeed in your circumstances you cannot find anything in which you can lend a hand, pray that the chance may be created for you, and it most certainly will be.

I think that this word 'pray' provides me with the last point that has to be made. It has been said that men fall, ultimately, into two classes: those who pray and those who don't. You have seen how Aloysius gradually learned to *pray* and not just say his prayers—though God be thanked when a man regularly and honestly does even that. But I repeat, one word of spontaneous 'talking to God,' is worth more than an hour of recitations. Start always with a little 'recited'

prayer—that is almost always necessary in order to get yourself into the fit state of mind for praying. But then at all costs speak to God. You need not speak long : but to speak sincerely means that you really have something in you that needs speaking about, and if you cannot at a given moment see what it is, there is always plenty in God for you to speak to Him about—to thank Him for. And the moment that you can no more speak thus ‘ out of your head, out of your heart,’ see whether you cannot prolong a little your immense privilege of being received thus in audience by your King, by saying those favourite prayers that you may be hoped to possess. Especially after Communion, try thus to speak to God : and if I may hazard a suggestion, you will find that a unique good is derived by you from some unofficial Communion, so to speak, made on a day when there is no obvious reason for your going to Communion—a day other than a Sunday or a feast-day, a day when there is no crowd : when it has demanded of you a quite personal little choice : when there is nothing to make you go save your personal desire to meet your Friend and speak to Him.

I conclude therefore that Aloysius is a man whom you will find fitted at all points to help you in the life you have to lead to-day. He had that tremendous invisible thing that Character is, underlying a man’s acts, right or wrong—the one thing you cannot be astonished or seduced into having : the one thing even in worldly success that really counts. For work done by a flimsy man will itself be flimsy. He achieved control over his senses and held them in firm order with powerful free will, and, having seen clearly that this *was* due order, found that purity reacted so as to make sight clearer still. The pest-bearing mists were dispersed : naught hindered vision. The contents of the world fell then into their right proportions and perspectives. Impossible thenceforward to be the dupe of a title, or fooled by the dream that money gives you happiness, or to need that disillusionment that men in power must endure, what they find that they beyond all others are slaves of chance, and of the limitations of other men.

Aloysius, then, freed from the frauds that make fools of most men, nor making idols of the senses, of money, or of rank, could devote himself to a work that should endure, and does endure. The Aloysian Apostolate, the Pope reminds us, did not finish in his grave.

We have then to be sure that the Saints are not shut up within their earthly history. The history of Aloysius only began, he himself might think, after his bodily death. St. Thérèse of Lisieux said to Sœur Marie Philomène, who had rebuked her for declaring that she would soon die ('for,' said she, 'you have not yet worked long enough'), that she was wrong. 'Look at St. Aloysius. God could have made him live long, to evangelize the nations: but He did not choose to do so, because He destined him to a far more fruitful mission: this young Saint did far more good through dying at twenty-four than had he lived to be eighty. He is doing an Apostolic work from heaven.' Do not then think of Aloysius as if he were now an Italian prince of the Renaissance: though it was certainly by means of being one that he became what now he is. Still less must you think that—well, he *was* a prince, and we are not, and how can any such renunciation be asked of us, and how then can he be our model? Recall that opposite Aloysius, in the church of St. Ignatius in Rome, lies, under no less magnificent an altar, a lad of twenty-two who began as a shoe-maker shop-boy—John Berchmans. It matters not at all what you are called, in what manner of house you are born or what money is yours to possess or to abandon: prince, or shop-boy, each became the man God created him to be, and did the work Christ put into his hand to do; and on each is the Church's seal. Do not even reflect, if you prefer, that Aloysius meant to be a priest, and became in fact a Jesuit, if that be not your vocation. He is united to-day with God by closer ties than vows are. But do not fail to recall that never a man, to-day, will be anything but better for a dose in his life of true poverty, chastity, and obedience. Hurt yourselves! Alms are scarcely alms until they make you feel that you have given them. Have I known one man who was the better for

great wealth? I have not known one, perhaps, who was quite uninjured by it. I think that always a man has to save his soul, let alone do noble work, *in spite* of his money. Recognize quite fearlessly that the modern world lays itself out to surround you with a soft suggestiveness that is more debauching, I feel, to true spiritual vigour than the crass brutality of past days. Explain our modern sensuality, if you like, on stage or in literature, as a reaction against Victorian prudery: but do not dream that thereby you justify it. It is unjustifiable, as such things always will be. And observe that the mere defiance of authority, custom, convention, is not only just destructive, but is as conventional as what it combats. Never was there a mental tyranny in Russia such as reigns there now: tedious enough is the art that thinks itself daringly modern simply because it writes or paints differently from what artists of some earlier generation used to do. The great forces that worked in Aloysius are needed now, if a man is to grow up a hero of a man at all; they were what he lived by: they are what he is able to transmit. May he do so.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

ST. ALOYSIUS's relics were 'translated' six times. The day after his death his body was taken to the domestic chapel: in the evening, it was carried to a large room and all kissed its hands, though Aloysius had but received minor orders. Thence it was taken to the church of the Annunciation (see p. 152) and the Office of the Dead was sung. The doors had to be shut to hold back the enormous crowds that sought admittance: even so, the body was fiercely despoiled by relic-hunters, and indeed mutilated. Bellarmine insisted that Aloysius ought not to be buried as the Jesuits mostly were, coffinless: he was laid therefore in a wooden coffin with a lead inscription and placed in the chapel of the crucifix, on the left as you entered: the common burial place was on the gospel side of the altar, by the street. In 1598, on June 22nd, the relics were placed in a smaller casket, high in the wall, on the street side, for fear they should get mixed with other bones, or injured by flood. The notion was fortunate. That very year, in December, a flood of unparalleled height swamped the city. To this translation was due the first diffusion of Aloysian relics even so far as India. On July 1st, 1602, the fame of the miracles of Aloysius had become so widespread, that the General ordered the relics to be placed in a leaden urn, within a wooden casket, and set beneath the predella of the altar of St. Sebastian. Though the translation was intended to be kept secret, people discovered the whereabouts of the relics and thronged their new resting-place. In 1605, the Saint's brother, Francis, who was imperial ambassador in Rome, considered that Aloysius was in no worthy situation, and obtained leave from the Pope, Clement VIII, to have him removed. This was done on May 13th,

the head being taken to the Gesù, till, in 1610, the prince obtained it for Castiglione. Meanwhile, Aloysius was entombed on the left of the altar of Our Lady in the same church, after being laid on the high altar to which he had been carried in solemn procession. On the 21st, Cardinal Dietrichstein obtained leave for Aloysius's portrait to be venerated, and himself placed a picture above the tomb. It was represented with rays round the head, and the title of Beato, which was, too, inscribed in the brief *Hic Iacet* epitaph. This same year the room in which Aloysius died was transformed into a chapel: it was afterwards demolished to make room for the church of Sant' Ignazio. On June 15th, 1620, the relics were again removed to a magnificent altar given by Tiberio Lancellotti, who had received miraculous cures from Aloysius. It was on this occasion that St. John Berchmans was an acolyte. This altar was afterwards removed to the sacristy of Sant' Ignazio, where it still is. On the 19th of June, the altar and chapel were consecrated in Aloysius's honour. The church of Sant' Ignazio was at last completed by the care of Cardinal Ludovisi, and on August 5th, 1649, the relics were moved into it and placed in the second chapel to the right, just below the position of the room of St. Aloysius in the old college. Finally, the colossal altar of St. Aloysius was finished by the care of the Lancellotti family, and on December 20th, 1699, the relics were transported thither and sealed in their urn beneath the altar. Here they remain. The extreme magnificence of the Saint's resting-place, surcharged with Gonzaga coronets and escutcheons, stands as our almost vulgar homage—for what else, exteriorly, can man offer?—to the soul of the young man that they commemorate. Curiously enough, far from urging the canonization of St. Aloysius, even though in 1605 Paul V's commission said he could be safely declared not only 'blessed,' but Saint, the Society twice (1620, 1671) petitioned that the canonization should be postponed till after those of Ignatius, Xavier, and Borgias. It took place December 31st, 1726.

The head of St. Aloysius, whose departure for Castiglione

gave such grief to the Roman Jesuits, returned thither for the space of the recent celebrations. On December 20th, 1926, a solemn Mass was celebrated in St. Aloysius's church at Castiglione, and after it, through streets gay with flags, between tapestried houses, and escorted by an enormous throng of the citizens, the gold and silver shrine containing the skull fared forth, passing the Capuchin church, where Francis, the Saint's brother, is buried, and the Duomo, where his mother lies, and where she saw his picture exposed above the altar. The bells of the whole town were ringing, the sky was cloudless, the snows on the foot-hills of the Alps were dazzling, and lake Garda a brilliant blue. The crowds, wildly acclaiming the Saint, kept pace with his relic till the tramway was reached. A special chapel-coach had been placed at the disposal of the Aloysian committee by the Company : it was draped in tricolour flags and decked with the Gonzaga arms. In every village on the way, the population, headed by their priests, had come forth to greet their Saint ; and in each, the Auxiliary Bishop of Mantua blessed the clamorous crowds with the relic. The cortege had started a little after 11 : at 12.30, it had reached Medole, where the crowds filled the vast public square. Solferino, Castel Goffredo, with their tragic memories, were passed by : who, as he shouted praise to Aloysius, recalled the kindred blood that had stained these streets ? May those turbulent souls find rest. Guidozzolo was reached : again the relic halted, while the great bell tolled from the commune tower, and Aloysian hymns rang out : in the vast Lombard spaces that ensued, children were seen kneeling at the doors of their cottages ; peasants would come running across the fields ; a huntsman knelt, gun in one hand, and saluted with the other ; boys clung to wintry branches, or escalated every truck by the station sides. Volta Mantovana ; Cereta, Cerlongo, Goito, Marmirolo—by now, the tramway-chapel was piled full with flowers. Already the domes and reddish towers of Mantua were to be seen, and the Mincio swimming wide and blue under a sky that might be April's. The piazza in front of the station was

thronged by men and women marshalled by carabinieri, who, as the relic appeared, sprang to the salute. An immense procession of cavalry, infantry, the whole ecclesiastical body of Mantua, all the schools and institutes, those, noticeably, of Pius X and Benito Mussolini, and the Mantovani escorted the relic in triumph through brilliant streets, and, detail that assuredly gladdened the heart of Aloysius, opposite the Civic Hospital, whose windows and balconies were filled with its patients, the procession halted and the skull was raised in blessing. As the shrine reached the Duomo, all its great bells rang out, and then, after three trumpet calls, a final blessing was imparted before the relic vanished into the packed Cathedral and was placed upon its throne in the midmost of the nave. Ancient uniforms were to be seen, worn by Knights of various orders, as well as the charming costume of the young Pages who everywhere reproduced the dress once worn by their patron. The Relic remained in Mantua for a week, while a Mission was being given : on one day it was transported to the church of St. Teresa, served by the Jesuit Fathers : the procession took place after dark, or rather, brilliantly illuminated by a thousand torches and tapers ; and if it is strange to think that when first the head of Aloysius went to Castiglione, it was refused permission to go to Mantua, lest the Jesuits of that city should lay hold of it and keep it, it is stranger still to picture it now, at long last, passing near those gorgeous palaces and those grim towers, that have survived in their dead bulk, yet unchanged since the days when this lad lived humbly there, slept upon the floor there, endured the frantic expostulations of his family that felt themselves destroyed by his intentions, and signed there that act of renunciation that set him free to become the one man of them all who makes their name remembered. At 5.30 on the Sunday, the procession—once more an informal one, and all the more impressive for that—left the church for the station, where it was placed in the chapel of a special train, filled with dignitaries and pilgrims. Two altars were placed in the chapel for Mass. At 7.20 the train started on its trium-

phal way, and although the weather had broken and was cold and rainy, all the night through, village after village sent its bells singing to the clouds, and the people came running down to the line to salute St. Aloysius. At Suzzara, 5,000 people waited in the rain, in a piazza superbly illuminated: and here as everywhere the civic authorities were present in full uniform, and the young men and boys of the place had the posts of honour. At Gonzaga itself, the communal flag displayed with good right the arms of the Saint's family, but soon afterwards, the train passed out of Gonzaga territory, though the acclamations at each station continued. Modena at 9.30; at 10.20 Bologna. There the train halted for more than half an hour, to permit of due veneration of the relic, and thereafter steamed with few intermissions for Rome.

From December 12th-19th, a quasi-mission had been preached in S. Ignazio at Rome in preparation for the arrival of the Relic. The services were, for the first time, maybe, in that church's history, in the evening. The rosary was followed by an hour's dialogue, between 'ignorant and learned,' on truths of religion apt to the occasion: this was followed by a sermon. On the final Sunday, there were two General Communions, and the Archbishop of Bari ordained a young diocesan of his at the Saint's altar. And on the evening of the 18th, a young professor from the Royal Liceo of Senegaglia gave a conference on St. Aloysius in that very Great Hall of the Roman College in which Aloysius had defended 'all philosophy' in September, 1582. By December 27th all was in readiness, thanks to the co-operation of everyone from the *Duce* downwards. Though the arrival of the Relic was not intended, at first, to be officially solemn, it became so. The Royal waiting-room at the station was thrown open and magnificently adorned. Strings of automobiles, lent by princes, awaited the arrival, in order to transport the Relic, and its escort, to the Collegio Massimo—idly since the Roman lads refused *not* to carry the reliquary, on their shoulders. And as the hour approached, the sun,

veiled hitherto, shone out. The train arrived, gorgeously decorated. The Relic was taken out, and after due solemnities, carried to the Istituto Massimo which, together with the Gregorian University (for clerics), carries on the work done at the Roman College till it was taken from the Society of Jesus. There the Relic rested till four in the afternoon, and the crowds were such that it became impossible to carry out the programme of religious services. Quaint event—the Relic was to go to S. Ignazio in automobile. Indeed, an immense procession of motor cars now passed through Rome, that which bore the Relic being lent by Prince Barberini, and in others were the Prefect of Rome and the Governor of Rome themselves, of whom that latter gave the flowers that adorned the ceremony. The 300 cars then started in double file, an incident, perhaps characteristic, occurring when the young men of the Massimo College felt that Aloysius was too much being stolen from them: they besieged his car, broke the procession, and sang the Magnificat all the time that it lasted. It passed by Sant' Andrea, where the Saint began his noviciate; then it arrived, through the packed and tumultuous streets, to the Roman College, and behold, by authoritative permission, the College bells, mute since 1870, rang triumphantly. Thence the Relic was carried on foot to S. Ignazio where a new magnificence of Cardinals awaited it. It was finally placed on St. Aloysius's altar. I do not intend to detail the solemnities of the Triduum that followed. Each day had its special colour. December 28th was reserved for the youth of Rome. The Minister of Public Education allowed all classes to cease at 10, for the children of every school to visit the Saint. They arrived, books under arm, by thousands, and the Scouts kept order in the ranks. Naturally, the various religious institutes of Rome came at their ease, and the huge church was filled the whole day through. The 29th saw the International Homage paid by the thousands of pilgrims come from other lands. The choir of the Polifonica sang nothing but Palestrina, under the conductorship of M. Casimiri, who provided a quite admirable

explanatory programme of the music. At least nine Cardinals were present, and a vast crowd of dignitaries. A long series of speeches in various languages followed, including Japanese, and when a Mexican delegate in his turn spoke, the vast church echoed with the welcome given to this representative of a martyred country. Finally, all the young men stood to recite the Apostles' Creed. On December 30th, the pilgrims had assisted, early, at a Mass said for them by the Sovereign Pontiff, and a High Mass sung by the Cardinal Vicar followed, at S. Ignazio, the nave being occupied by 1,000 students from the Gregorian University. During the afternoon, from 1 to 3.30, girls from various institutes came to the church; in the evening, there were other sermons and a Benediction for men.

On December 30th, the papal element in the celebrations began with the Mass of St. Stanislaus, affectionately chosen by the Holy Father for that day, partly because it may indeed have been felt that the little Saint was being all too inevitably eclipsed by his magnificent confrère, and also, to please the great Polish contingent—Poland has never forgotten the sojourn there of Monsignore Ratti. At 11 o'clock, 4,000 young men began to flow back towards the Vatican, led by the bishops and cardinals. The Pope spent two hours at least in going from group to group and speaking to individuals: then he went to the Hall of Benedictions, went first to look at the sixty volumes of signatures of those who had promised to observe the 'Aloysian pact' to which we recur below, and then sat to deliver the following discourse:

Do not be surprised, my dear lads—dear within that universal family that the Heart of Jesus has given to Us to govern—if Our delight is so great when We embrace you thus in one glance both of eyes and thought. In fact this multitude of Our sons seems to Us so fair that We gladly take upon Our lips the words of the Patriarch Isaac, spoken long ago: 'Lo, the fragrance of my son is as the scent of a rich field that the Lord has blessed.' But more gladly still do We say from Our heart to you those lovely words

—*Salvete flores*—hail, flowers of the peoples, flowers of youth ; and in a true sense We say, Hail, Flowers of the Martyrs [from Prudentius's hymn on the Innocents : the applause that broke out at this moment was terrific] ! To you first We speak, and to you first We say Our ' hail,' who have come to Us from the distant land of Mexico, sons of martyrs and destined perhaps yourselves to become martyrs. Honour to you, and to your country, to your bishops and your pastors, to your priests and to all of you who are enduring so glorious a combat, to the admiration of the whole world, for the glory of God, for the reign of Christ, for the honour of our holy mother, the Church, for the dignity and salvation of souls. Hail, sons and brothers of the Martyrs, and do you carry Our salutations together with the first and foremost of Our blessings, when you return into your native land. Hail, too, to you, dear sons, that have come from Poland, whom not the Aloysian lilies alone have called to Rome, but the innocence of the little Stanislaus, the Benjamin among the younger Saints. Hail, in fine, to you all, but to you especially who have come from afar. We appreciate the far from trivial inconveniences that you have undertaken in order to come to Rome to see your Father, bringing so much charm of spirit and life that you may well be regarded as the flowers and the flowering hopes of the future. Dear too are you who have come hither at the call of Aloysius, for by your very presence you profess and display what is the goal to which, drawn by the splendid example of Gonzaga, you are striving. Your presence confirms to Us what you said to Aloysius as you started on your way—' Draw us after thee ! we will run towards the fragrance of thy perfume.'

The Holy Father then spoke of the masculine virtue of purity, and added :

Love purity, which is the splendid adornment of youth : if it be present, all the other virtues are strong ; if it is absent, all of them falter and are in danger. I repeat,

love purity, for in it you will find all those most precious things that are necessary to life and its perfection in each and every state. Purity nourishes the light of the mind, generosity of heart, vigour of soul, and even the health of the body. A most precious virtue indeed, but very difficult to preserve. And that you may so preserve it with daily more determined will, ask it earnestly from God, remembering the words of the book of Wisdom—no one can control himself unless God grants it. The Grace of God is absolutely necessary if purity is to be kept: let that be well fixed in your minds. Pray, then, to receive grace. Ask, and you shall receive: to prayer is promised a reward completely sure. Pray, and watch. Watch and pray. For prayer wins for you what belongs to God alone, that is, help for human strength, or rather necessary for human weakness. But it belongs to your personal watchfulness to keep your purity from shock and danger. What sort of watchfulness? Every sort, my dear boys. Exterior watchfulness, since your life is lived through in the world, and the world is full of the fascination of frivolity, and that fascination, as the Divine spirit warns us, eclipses good, and the inconstancy of desire perverts the feeling even when the will is not bad. (The Pope added a few words on the extreme value of work, intellectual and even physical, which is not only a powerful safeguard, but has been entrusted to men as a noble means of true regeneration.)

But there is another virtue that is very useful for the protection of purity, that is, humility, for God loves none but the humble. If humility be not yours, you will not feel the necessity of that divine help, nor the necessity of that watchfulness in the matter of keeping purity intact, for the proud man does not perceive his dangers, nor his self-insufficiency. So not only he falls, but he collapses into sheer ruin. So accept the example of Aloysius, who, despite such an abundance and superabundance of divine gifts, both of nature and of grace, decided, though he might have shone resplendent among the first men of this world, to

renounce all things, and live hidden and unknown. So be earnest in prayer, in watchfulness, and in humility.

One thing remains for the perfection of your life: to follow charity. Ask for charity with all your heart from God, the charity with which the Heart of Jesus burned, a high-hearted charity of action. Here is a sentence that I commit to you to think about—Place your purity beneath the robe of charity. Thus acted Aloysius ever, who throughout his life devoted himself wholly to true charity. How, in fact, did he die, if not giving his life in the succouring of his brothers, pitifully sick—a glorious victim of his charity?

This is what, dear sons, from the fullness of Our own heart we transfer to yours and entrust to you. Observe these things, and if you do them, you will be worthy to be called the disciples of St. Aloysius Gonzaga. That during your life, in the fullness of your youth, in the very flower of your years, you thought and willed these things, will be a very dear memory to you in the rest of your life which, God granting it, we pray may be a very fine thing in the case of each and all of you. (The Pope then gave his whole-hearted blessing to the pilgrims and those whom they represented, ending thus:)

May Our Blessing descend upon all the regions whence you have come, upon your lands, your states, your families, your parents, on your work and your undertakings. And if there are in your homes any little children, than whom none are more dear to the Heart of Jesus, if there are old people or sick people there, who, because of their pains, are worthy of very special blessing and consolation, We bless them all very lovingly. Our Blessing embraces all the desires that each of you entertains in heart and mind, and may it descend upon you, and remain always with you, and together with the blessing of God keep pace with you for ever in all the pathways of your lives.

The Pope declared that he had spent a very long time with his young men—he had indeed: well over four hours—but that it was well spent. He met them again on the 31st of

December, the actual anniversary of the Canonization. He had always meant to say a Mass in St. Peter's for the pilgrims: as the year went on, the notion developed into a superb function—a Mass short only of a coronation solemnity. The Pope resolved to say the Mass of Christ The King, and to commemorate thereat St. Francis and St. Aloysius—Gonfalonier of the King, Squire of the King, as the *Osservatore* picturesquely and truly put it. Through a Rome *en fête* the Relic was therefore taken in the evening of the 30th to the Vatican Basilica, and solemnly enthroned over the Confession of St. Peter. And next day, in the presence of 50,000 people, of whom 8,000 were Aloysian pilgrims, the magnificent ceremony unfurled itself, and the vast fans went bowing down the nave. In the afternoon, the relic went back to S. Ignazio, and in the evening the sixty volumes containing the names of innumerable young men, who had undertaken to use, as their life's principles, those principles of faith, of purity, of service and of loyalty to the Holy See that had belonged to Aloysius, were placed on the Saint's altar.

It might be asked why no English volume was offered. The answer is simple. In other countries, there is a strong Aloysian tradition. An immense number of priests and others were occupied in preaching everywhere the Commemoration. Hence a considerable time could be allotted to each place, or college, or other group or institution, and the Aloysian ideals could so be set forth as to warrant the hearers being asked to make certain very solemn undertakings. In this country, the work of making the Commemoration so much as known fell, on the whole, to the endeavours of one man: it was decided that it was better to make the Pope's wishes and message, and the stories of the Saints, known over so wide an area as possible. Hence save in a very few places nothing like Aloysian retreats, or triduums, or even courses of sermons, could be attempted. The welcome given to lectures and isolated sermons and so forth was quite extraordinary, especially in certain dioceses, and unbounded gratitude ought to be felt by everyone concerned in the Commemoration

towards all, from the hierarchy downwards, who laboured so much to make possible this incessant and ubiquitous lecturing. However, the lecturer very strongly felt that it would be quite disproportionate, and open to the charges of artificiality and even the risk of insincerity, to invite men, who had heard, say, but one lecture, to put their names to a series of solemn undertakings. Still, a means was devised for proving to the Holy Father that his wishes had not been neglected. English Catholics love the Holy See : letters were therefore prepared, stating very simply that His Holiness's message had been delivered and understood, and that thanks were offered to him, and that the hearers would seek never to forget the two main points made and remade by the Holy Father—the necessity of a reliable Catholic Character founded upon Faith, and the duty of doing unselfish Work, inspired by Charity. His blessing was then asked and the Letters, signed by persons representative of the audience, were taken to Rome in May, 1927, on the occasion of the National Pilgrimage in honour of St. Gregory. During this pilgrimage H.E. Cardinal Bourne said the Mass of St. Aloysius at the tomb of the Saint on behalf of the pilgrims, who all assisted. The box containing the Letters in honour of the Saint was placed during the Mass on the altar. Afterwards it was taken to the Vatican and presented to the Holy Father who looked at the Letters in detail, and afterwards deigned to write through Cardinal Gasparri to say how pleased he was with the Letters and the care that had been taken to carry out his wishes. He was especially pleased that not only seminaries, colleges, or schools had heard his Message, but, naval and military camps, aerodromes, prisons, hospitals, and the poorest parts of great cities.

An incident of real interest and charm occurred. At the beginning of each year, a military function is celebrated in Rome, when soldiers make the resolution of eschewing blasphemy. On this occasion an enormous quantity of soldiers, drawn from every part of the army, and headed by 100 officers and six generals, came to venerate the Saint, who,

when a little boy, had passed in review the 3,000 infantry of Casalmaggiore, and had profited all too well by his life in barracks. There were some other visits—the Gesù, the Gregorian University, the Opera Cardinal Ferrari: and an exquisitely-conceived incident was the festa arranged in the Consolazione hospital, where St. Aloysius worked so hard, and all the sick were able to make their Communions in his honour, and, very rightly, the day ended with a more material festa at which the Saint's health was drunk in honest wine.

I need not relate in detail the return journey of the Relic. It returned by Montepulciano (where a fragment of a relic of Blessed Robert Bellarmine, a citizen of that town and the Saint's confessor, was associated to it) and Siena (twice visited by Aloysius) and Arezzo, to Florence. A motor belonging to the del Turco family met the Relic! And need I say that in Florence it was to the altar in the Annunziata, where his vow had been made, that Aloysius paid his visit. Thence to Bologna, Novellara, Guastalla, and to Modena for three days' celebrations. Slowly to Cremona, Piacenza, Lodi; thence to Pavia where Aloysius met Frederick Borromeo; and after a magnificent salute from all Genoa, by way of Savona to Turin, where every civic authority, including the heir to the throne, did honour to the relic, and the prince in fact joined the Archconfraternity of St. Aloysius. Best of all, from Turin the Relic went to Chieri, hard by, and you may imagine with what gladness it was carried to the house that was once Donna Marta's home. Casal Monferrato was not forgotten, and thus by Sunday, February 13th, the whole of Milan, covered with flags and illuminated, was celebrating the Saint in its white Cathedral. By town after town and village after village, which sent their populations out to meet it, the Relic came to Como, where the sinking of the *Lecco*, which carried the skull across the lake, might have ended its voyage. Providence, however, saved the relic, and the courage of the bishop, Mgr. Pagani, who clung to it in his and its moments of extreme peril, will not be forgotten. Vercelli, Bergamo—and the Carnival itself was

seen to transfer its crowds to the following of the Saint. On March 6th, Aloysius arrived in Venice where he went first to Sta Maria della Salute, whose dome none can forget, because that church was a thanksgiving for the cessation of the plague of 1630, and Aloysius had died in serving the plague-stricken. This sort of charming touch constantly beautifies this commemoration. Next day the Basilica of St. Mark received the Relic, and then, it gradually returned to Castiglione, and the tower that had quivered so long ago to the peal of its bells when Aloysius was born, was allowed once more to salute his home-coming after a celebration such as, I think, can never have been seen yet in modern times, and seldom in bygone days.

APPENDIX II

ST. ALOYSIUS'S MEDITATION ON THE ANGELS

ST. ALOYSIUS wrote his meditation on the Angels at the request of Fr. Vincenzo Bruno, who wished to fit it into a series of such meditations that he was composing. It had therefore to follow an indicated plan, but we are assured that the touches added by Bruno must have been very slight. It is remarkable that a scholastic should be asked by a priest for collaboration in an ascetical work he was engaged upon : it is a side-light on the view taken of Aloysius at the time. Bruno, born at Rimini, 1532, entered the Society in 1558, and was rector of the Roman College when Aloysius came to repeat his philosophy there in 1587, and it was before Bruno, then, that Aloysius took his first vows. Aloysius wrote the meditation in Italian, not Latin, and the series appeared at Venice 1585-1590, and again at Genoa 1589-1592, and was called : *Delle Meditazioni sopra i principali misterii di tutta la Vita di Cristo N. Signore, sopra le sette festività principali della b. Vergine, e sopra il commune de' Santi, raccolte da diversi Santi Padri e da altri devoti autori.*

MEDITATION ON THE ANGELS

Gospel.

The disciples came to Jesus saying (Mt. xviii. 1 *sqq.*) : Who, thinkest thou, shall be the greater in the kingdom of heaven ? And Jesus calling a child set him in the midst of them and said : Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you be converted and become like little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. But whosoever shall make himself humble like this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom

of heaven. Beware lest you despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven ever behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.

Prophecies.

(1) Ps. cxiii. 6. Who is like to the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high and regardeth the humble in heaven and on earth?

(2) God exalteth the humble. Job. v. 11.

(3) I beheld till thrones were set, and the Ancient of Days did sit; his raiment was white like snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool. Thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand millions were assisting him (Dan. vii. 9, 10).

(4) God hath given his angels charge concerning thee, to guard thee in all thy ways (Ps. xc. 11).

(5) The angel of God shall mount guard around all that fear the Lord, and shall deliver them from all dangers (Ps. xxxiii. 8).

(6) Beware lest thou say in the presence of the angel: There is no Providence: lest perchance God being angry at thy words destroy all the works of thy hands (Eccl. v. 5.).

THE ANGELS

I. IN GENERAL

Reflect how Christ our Lord, for the great love that He bears to us His creatures, never ceases to provide us with ever new occasions for enabling us to acquire His grace and to make progress in virtue; that we may at the last achieve the end that He has prepared for us, eternal bliss. Wherefore He has willed that in His Church all the mysteries of our redemption should be celebrated, that refreshing from time to time our memory of all that the Lord has done and suffered for the love of us, we might encourage ourselves to love and serve Him, and also conform all our actions to the example that He has left us in His most holy life. And not content

with this, He has willed that in particular there should be special commemoration of His most holy and blessed Mother, and also of all the various categories of saints and of certain outstanding ones so that they might act as our protectors, and that they might succour us with their prayers in our necessities spiritual and temporal, and also provide us with occasions for imitating their virtue and the example of their holy behaviour. Similarly He willed that the memory of the Holy Angels too should be celebrated with some solemnity, since the Church and all of us continually receive such benefits by their intervention. And it was very right that men should show some gratitude towards them, since they so greatly desire and work for our salvation. For this reason then the Holy Church celebrates the memory of the glorious St. Michael her special Protector, and of all the other angels and Archangels, of the heavenly hierarchy for they are all, as the Apostle says, servants, and bestir themselves in one way or another for the salvation of the elect (Heb. i). These blessed spirits do not disdain to lower themselves to the service of man, so much inferior to themselves, because they see that the great God, whom they serve with so much eagerness and joy, humbled Himself to take up, for man's salvation, the form of that self-same man. Nor do they scorn to have him for companion, nor that by means of these poor little worms, of this poor dust, the walls of the celestial Jerusalem should be built up, and its ruins restored, because they adore beyond and above themselves the self-same God made man (Ps. 50). And look, how rightly the Church reads, on the feast of the Archangel, the gospel of Humility; because even as Lucifer the proud through wishing to usurp the honour due to God, was hurled from the highest seat in heaven into the depths of hell, so the humble Michael, and all the array of good angels, by submitting themselves to their Creator, and opposing themselves through zeal for His glory to that insolent serpent, were so highly exalted and honoured by God (Apoc. 12). This gospel is also set before us on the feast of all those angels who along with the blessed Michael acquired the crown of

glory by the virtue of humility, in order that men may understand that this is the infallible and eternal decree of God, that no one can ascend to the glory that the angels possess, save by the path of humility, by which they fared. Nay, even Christ Himself our Saviour acquired by means of this same virtue the glory of His sacred Body, as the Apostle says : *Humiliavit semetipsum usque ad mortem, etc. Propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum, etc. (Phil. 2)*. Because He humbled Himself, and was obedient even to death, therefore did God so greatly exalt and glorify Him. So it would be a monstrous thing that His members, that we His faithful are, should enter by any other door than that by which their Head did enter.

(2) Consider now the excellence of these heavenly courtiers, of these Princes of Paradise, for although our intellect cannot fully understand nor seize it, none the less, by means of this dim light, which by their ministry is communicated to us concerning the things that we know here below, we shall proceed to recall for their honour some little of the dignity and glory that the Lord has granted to them. There are then three things that can render illustrious the court or the army of a great Prince. First, the nobility of its members ; second, their numbers ; third, the order to be observed among them. All these three elements shine out splendidly in the angelic Spirits, because if you consider them first as to their nature, they are the worthiest works that the hands of that great Artist, God, has fashioned. They are of spiritual substance, incorruptible in its essence and more perfect than any other creature : their intellect is such that it cannot have any error or ignorance concerning things of nature ; and, conformably with this greater light that they possess in their intelligence, they have also a will more firm, more perfect, such that no passions can ever distress it. Next, if you turn to considering the state in which they now are, in grace, they have acquired their glory, eternal happiness, without ever having sinned. And beyond this, in their very substance they are arrayed in the robe of grace divine, which makes them beautiful and lovely in the sight of the Lord. In their intelligence they are endowed

with the clear light of glory whereby they see their Creator face to face ; and in their will they are adorned with the habit of charity, whereby, loving God with the love of friends, they are made both sons and friends of the self-same God. Now, my soul, contemplate the beauty of these heavenly citizens, who, like so many morning Stars or most bright Suns shine in the City of God, and how in them as in most limpid mirrors are reflected the divine perfections—the infinite power, the eternal wisdom, the ineffable goodness and the burning love of the Creator. Oh how gracious, how pure, and how lovable are these blessed Spirits, how zealous for the glory of their Lord, and how eager and anxious for our salvation ; and accordingly how worthy of being specially loved and revered by us. Indeed if Honour (as philosophers say) is a respect that is due to a man for some high quality, that he possesses in himself, and thus among men, though according to their nature they are all of them equals, yet those who by reason of some such gifts stand out from the others, are wont to be so much esteemed and honoured, how much more right is it that we, who are creatures so low in comparison with those heavenly Spirits, should honour and reverence them ; since each of them, even the least of them, in all the endowments and excellencies mentioned above, is indefinitely greater than mankind ? And further, if the Holy Angels, creatures so worthy, both by nature and by grace, beyond all other creatures, abase themselves, and honour man, because God loves and honours him, it does seem wholly fitting that we, poor little worms, should honour with all affection and devotion those whom God honours and exalts so high in heaven. For these are those beloved sons, who ever see the face of the Father, and those white and pure lilies among whom He feeds, and those mountains full of fragrant perfumes, over which moves the Spouse and wherein He takes His pleasure. (Mt. 18, Cant., 2, 8.)

(3) After the dignity and excellence of this heavenly Court, consider the number and the order of the Courtiers. And first, as for the number, it is so great, that it outstrips not

only all men now alive, but all who have ever been, or ever shall be, till the day of judgment. The multitude of these blessed spirits is in the likeness of that sand of the sea, or of the stars, of which the Wise Man says that it cannot be numbered. And as St. Denys the Areopagite affirms, the number of the angels is greater than any number that material objects in this world can provide. '*Milia milium*,' says the Prophet, '*ministrabant ei, et decies milies centena milia assistebant ei* (Eccl. 1; Dion. Areop. De Cael. Hierarch. 9; Dan. 7.). Thousands of thousands served the Lord, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. Here the Scripture puts, according to its wont, a definite number instead of the indefinite, and the greatest number that men know, for us to understand that this number can be reckoned up by God alone; and that, which in God is numerable, among men is innumerable and infinite. And indeed we read in Job, *Numquid est numerus militum eius?* (Job 15). Can there be any number to His hosts? Of which number again the Royal Prophet says, speaking of the Angels: *Currus Dei decem milia laetantium, Dominus in eis in Sina in Sancto* (Ps. 67). The chariots of the Lord are ten thousands of many thousands of the triumphant: the Lord dwells among them in His holy mountain Sion. And the Evangelist says, as is written in the Apocalypse (7), that he saw a great multitude of Saints, who stood in the presence of God, of all peoples, tongues and nations, that could by no manner of means be numbered. If this number of the elect—that we know after all to be the lesser part of mankind—is so great that it cannot be numbered, what are we to think shall be that of the Angels, who are ten times beyond the number of all men? And it was very right that the Courtiers of this heavenly Monarch should be in such numbers, for, if the Wise Man says: *In multitudine populi dignitas regis, et paucitate plebis ignomina principis* (Prov. 14)—In the multitude of the people consists the dignity and the greatness of the King, and the fewness of the folk is the disgrace and dishonour of the Prince—God, then, being that most exalted Prince, King of kings, and

Lord of lords, it was most fitting that He should have a most ample family, and a numerous Court, in that spacious kingdom, that immeasurable Palace of His in Heaven (i Tim. 6; Apoc. 17). Oh, what consolation and joy would it be, my soul, to be able to see a multitude of beautiful beings, so worthy by nature, no noble by grace, so blessed in glory! Oh, if ever it might be your happy destiny to be able to find yourself among those heavenly squadrons, in the company of such great princes, and sons of God, who are, too, your brothers! For those sublime and loving Spirits do not feel shame to have men for their brothers, because their Lord Himself not only does not disdain to be called so Himself, but actually, by taking our flesh, willed to make Himself our brother in reality. (Heb. 2) Oh, how gladly would you too together with those angelic voices praise and bless your Lord for so great a benefit from Him received!

(4) Consider further the wonderful order wherein the divine Providence has disposed and ordered these glorious spirits both as towards their Creator and among themselves and in regard of the other creatures of this world. And first, if you consider them among themselves, you will not find, in that vast number of Holy Angels, any confusion, but a sublime order and a marvellous relationship, suited to various ways of understanding, the one higher and more worthy than the other, according as God reveals to them His divine secrets, and uses their ministry for the benefit of man. Descending then to the particular, all this multitude of blessed Spirits is divided into three hierarchies, supreme, midmost, and lowest. And again, each of these hierarchies is similarly distinguished into three Choirs of Angels, supreme, midmost and lowest. The first contains the Seraphim, the Cherubim and the Thrones. Hence by their names you can easily perceive their offices, wherein they energize: and this is indeed proper to God—to give names to His creatures conformable to the offices He commits to them. Contemplate therefore the first Choir of the Seraphim, who after the manner of secret and private chamberlains of the King of Heaven are, conformably

to their name, not only filled and on fire with love, but have become like a spiritual furnace, always burning with the divine charity. And not only they are themselves thus on fire, but they give fire and light to the Angels that are inferior to them. And now contemplate the Cherubim, so named for the fullness of knowledge, for a greater light of the intelligence, that they possess beyond all the other lesser Spirits, for that they know God more clearly and know more that is in Him. So they are like Councillors of the celestial King, full of knowledge and of wisdom, which similarly they communicate to the Angels lesser than they. Contemplate next, the Thrones which, like intimate special secretaries of God, have been adorned with this name because they are like seats, or royal thrones, whereon after a certain manner the Divine Majesty sits and takes Its rest, and they, wherever they go, carry It with them as in a Pontifical Chair. Descend then to the second hierarchy, which contains three other Choirs of Angels, the Dominations, the Virtues and the Powers, which are especially designed for the general government of this lower world. And first, consider the Dominations, which represent the Dominion of that supreme Prince, and like Viceroys command others inferior to themselves and direct them in their divine service for the government of the Universe. And now consider the Virtues, which shadow forth with their power and virtue the infinite power of the Lord of all virtues, accomplish the harder tasks, and produce marvellous effects in creatures, in His service. Third, contemplate the Powers, which, like judges, represent the authority and power of the Universal Judge; and have for office the curbing of the powers of the air, removing far from men all that can molest or hinder them, so that they may the better achieve their salvation. Descending finally to the third and last hierarchy, in which are contained the other three Choirs, the Principalities, the Archangels, and the Angels, consider the first and highest Choir of the Principalities, called by this name because, as this last hierarchy is deputed by God to follow out His divine behests towards creatures, those of the first Choir,

representing the supreme Prince, are set by Him to govern the various provinces and several realms. These, again, as superior, receive their orders immediately from God, and communicate them to the other Angels, lending them too their aid in executing them. There follow then the other two choirs, Archangels and Angels, which, conformably with their names, are like Legates, and messengers sent by God into the world for various reasons, and again are deputed to the guardianship of places and particular persons. Nor is there any difference between these two Choirs, save that the Archangels are deputed for greater things and enterprises, Angels, for the less. And all this is that little that we can understand of that divine architecture and order of the House of God. If the eye of our intellect could scan further and consider more in particular the nature and office of each Angel, it would find that as each has a special office and duty in that Heavenly Jerusalem, so with a special order do they render beyond measure beautiful that happy multitude and Court of the heavenly King. For even as we see in this our material heaven which is adorned with such stars, and mapped out with planets in their various spheres, and celestial bodies, which move in so marvellous an order, and send their influences to our earth, not otherwise does that spiritual and invisible heaven contain in itself, like so many shining stars, a vast variety of Angels through whom, as through the Planets, the Lord of the Universe sends to our earth the influences of His graces and spiritual gifts (3 Kings 10). Now, my soul, if the Queen of Saba, when she had heard the wisdom of Solomon and had seen the magnificence of his palace and the number and the order of his servants, who ministered unto him, all-but fainting with marvel at the prudence of that most wise king, she had no spirit left within her, and said to him : Happy are they who stand in thy presence, and blessed are the servants that are worthy to see thy face and to listen to thy wisdom—Oh, if you could come to understand the dignity, the excellence, and the order of the Court of the true Solomon, who with His eternal wisdom and art has so well arranged

and ordered it, how much more reason would you have not only to marvel at it along with that Queen, but rather with that holy Prophet to faint away with desire and love of that blessed habitation ! What consolation and what joy would be thine, if after the race of this life thou couldst go, thou too, to do honour and be courtier to that Lord, along with those happy Spirits, that Lord whom they serve, *et cui servire regnare est*—and whom to serve, is to reign ! O holy and pure Angels, and truly blessed, who ever stand before the Divine Presence, and see with such exultation the face of that heavenly Solomon by whom you have been filled with such wisdom, and made worthy of such glory, and adorned with such prerogatives ! You brilliant stars, that so happily do shine in that empyrean heaven, pour, I pray you, into my soul, too, your blessed influences : preserve my life without stain, my hope firm, my behaviour without flaw, my love wholly Godwards, and towards my neighbour. I pray you, blessed Angels, that with your help, you will deign to lead me, as by my very hand, by the royal road of humility whereby you first did travel, so that I may be made worthy, after this life, to see together with you the blessed face of the eternal Father, and to be along with you numbered in the place of one of those stars that through their pride did fall from heaven.

II. OF THE ANGELS IN PARTICULAR

BUT after contemplating the Hierarchy of the Angels, it is fit to consider the glory of that unconquered Captain of the heavenly armies, St. Michael the Archangel, who for his great zeal and fidelity was constituted by God Prince over all those Angels who for various ministries are sent into the world. The most blessed Michael was also honoured with this name, which means : ‘ Who is like unto God ? ’ because when that proud Lucifer exalted himself, through wishing to be like God, the brave Archangel, unable to support such an insult to his Lord, inflamed with burning indignation cried out : *Quis ut Deus ? Quis ut Deus ?* that is, who is so bold, so powerful as

to be able to liken himself to God ? as though he said : There is not in the heavens, nor the whole universe, anyone like unto our God. O most valiant Michael, truly worthy of this name, blessed be thou among all the Angels, and worthy of all praise and honour among men, because thou wast so faithful and so zealous for the glory of thy Creator ! This glorious Archangel was endowed by God not only in the Church triumphant but in the Church militant with many a privilege. Thus first, under the ancient Law he was made protector and guardian of the Synagogue, and then, under the New Testament, Prince and protector of the Church of God. This is that valorous Duke and Captain whose high spirit and zeal all the squadrons of the good angels did follow, and who set himself against the audacity of that venomous dragon and shattering his head won thus the victory, and hurled him from the sky, together with all his followers (Apoc. xii). And further, on all occasions, whenever there was need to bring any succour, and to fight for the safety of the Christian folk, there was ever present the invincible Michael. He in Egypt fought for the people of God, freeing them by means of many a sign and miracle from the slavery of Pharaoh. He was that Angel who in that horrible night struck by divine command all the firstborn of Egypt. He for the space of forty years, leading the way, as Captain and Guide of the Children of Israel, plunged in the Red Sea the army of Pharaoh who was pursuing them ; slew and exterminated so many tribes and armies that opposed them : and finally introduced them safe and sound into that land which God had promised them. (Deut.) Again, after the death of Moses, when the sly Devil proposed to cause the people of God to commit idolatry, by means of his holy body, this strong Archangel, jealous for the divine honour and the salvation of those souls, valorously opposed him, and defeated him. He finally when the people of Israel was carried away prisoner into Babylon, and when the time for its captivity prescribed was not accomplished, went to its help, and to remove all hindrances to its liberation. And although in some of these occasions and events the name

of Michael is not expressly mentioned, none the less, he being constituted by God as protector and guardian of that people, one can hold as certain either that he intervened in person, or other Angels did so by commission of their Prince, Michael.

Further, this glorious Archangel, besides the general protection that he exercises over the Holy Church, has also as special duty the receiving of all the souls of the righteous when they pass out of this world and cross into the other life, of defending them from the ambushes and attacks of the enemy, and of presenting them before the judgment-seat of Christ, so that they may receive the reward which shall be allotted to them by God conformably to the merits of each.

Further, when the end of the world shall come, there shall likewise appear this most brave Archangel, to fight against the Antichrist, who will strive by means of false miracles to pervert the Faithful, in order to defend the Church of God from that terrible persecution. (1 Thess. iv.) And when he has obtained his victory, and chained the Prince of darkness in the pit of the infernal abyss, the selfsame Archangel shall sound that terrible trumpet at whose voice all the dead shall rise and shall present themselves before that Eternal Judge, to hear that final verdict whereby the righteous shall be rewarded with eternal glory, while sinners shall be condemned to perpetual torment. Then shall be no more time of mercy nor of grace, but only a rigorous justice; and all, by the just judgment of God shall be destined to that place which each in this world shall have deserved. O unconquered Prince, and most faithful Guardian of the Church of God, and of faithful souls, who didst ever with such charity and zeal set thyself amid such battles, and employ thyself in such adventures, not to obtain for thyself fame and reputation, as the Captains of this world are wont to do, but to increase and preserve that glory and honour which we all owe to our God, and also by desire for the salvation of men, come, I pray thee, to the help of my soul, which continuously and so dangerously is attacked by the flesh, the world, and the devil, its enemies. And as thou

wast guide in the desert to the people of Israel, deign also to be my faithful Leader and Escort through the desert of this world, till thou shalt lead me safe into that happy land of the living, to that blessed fatherland, wherefrom we are all pilgrims. O my soul, when shall have come that last hour of thy day, when thou shalt find thyself in that terrible and perilous strait, when thou shalt be compelled to gather thyself out of this thy so-loved body, and pass naked and alone through that most narrow door of death's agony, and through such squadrons of the infernal Power, thy uttermost enemies, that shall be standing round thee like furious lions roaring and prepared to tear thee and devour thee—O if at that moment this unconquered Archangel, even as he has shown himself ever prompt in all things that concern the faithful soul, so should condescend to come once more, with his noble battalion, to thine aid, to fight for thee, and, covering thee with that most strong shield of his protection, make thee pass safe through the midst of thine enemies! If again before the Tribunal of that most severe Judge he should take up thy protection, answering for thee, and obtaining by his prayers the pardon of thy sins; and finally, welcoming thee beneath his victorious standard should lead thee to present thee in that holy and blessed Light, where he and all the Angels and the chosen sons of Light are resplendent with eternal praise and glory to their Creator—O, what refreshment will be thine, and with what great consolation and content of thy heart shalt thou have departed from this world.

After the glorious Prince Michael, consider the dignity and the excellent prerogatives of the Archangel Gabriel, who, albeit in the Scriptures he is called 'Angel,' must not for that be thought of as being one of those of the lowest rank, those that are specially sent for the help and service of men, but he was more than Angel: he was Archangel, and first of the Archangels. For, even as the ministry that he came to announce, was no common work or ministry, but the most excellent and most worthy that God had ever achieved, so we must hold that this divine Messenger was one of the highest

and most worthy personages that exist in that Hierarchy. This is that faithful friend of the celestial Spouse, who, made aware by Him of the profound secret of His Incarnation, was the first to manifest it to the world (Luke i.). And this is that gracious Paranympth that was intermediary between the Most High God and the simple Virgin of Nazareth, between the Eternal Word and our human nature. Now, the better to understand the dignity of this Archangel, consider in particular the offices that were entrusted to him by the Lord. And first (as some Saints affirm) we may piously believe that he was given for special Guardian to the most Blessed Virgin. And even as God had no other pure creature, neither in heaven nor on earth, that He loved more, or that was more worthy, than Mary the Virgin, so we can think that as the Princes of the world are wont to give what they prize most into the custody of the most favourite courtiers that they have, so in this heavenly court the glorious Gabriel must be one of the most dear and favourite before the King of Heaven. Consider next the other office of this blessed Archangel, which was to be Ambassador sent by the Most Holy Trinity for a business so high, so important, as was the Incarnation of the Sole-Begotten Son of God, for the redemption and salvation of the whole world. So right well befits him this holy name of Gabriel, a truly mystery-ful name, which means, 'The Man of God,' because he announced Christ to the world, who was to be both God and man. Further this name 'Gabriel' more properly means 'Might of God,' and this by reason of the selfsame work that he announced to the world, which was that most strong and tripled cord, that most strait union of the divine nature with the body and most holy soul of Christ in one most simple hypostasis and person of the Eternal Word, as it is written: 'A triple cord is hard to break' (Eccl. iv.). Again he is called the Might of God, because by his embassy he was the means of the divine strength being communicated to us, God having taken up our weakness together with our human nature. Whence men, by virtue of this strength, became so courageous and strong, that they have done things

beyond all human strength and power (Luke ii.). O Angel truly strong, since not only by thine embassy hast thou brought divine strength to men, but also hast brought to us God Himself strong beyond all strength ; who, despoiling and chasing from the world that ' strong man armed ' who for so many years had played the tyrant over it, didst free us from his enslavement, and restore us to the freedom of the children of God !

It remains, after considering the zeal and the illustrious deeds of the Prince Michael and the mysterious strength of the Archangel Gabriel, that we consider similarly the busy charity of the Angel Raphael, who, being as the same writer said, one of the Seven Spirits that stand before the face of God, must surely be one of the principal angels of Paradise (Tob. xii.). And in connection with this we shall consider the many benefits that each man receives in soul as in body from his Angel Guardian. For this glorious Raphael, as by the name that is his, so by reason of the acts of charity that he performed toward the old and the young Tobias, was precisely a type and express figure of all that the Angel Guardians do towards ourselves (Tob. vi. and xi.). And to start with the name of Raphael suits him very well, for it means ' Medicine of God,' seeing that he produced, precisely, the effect of a medicine, both spiritual in the case of the young Tobias, and corporal in regard of his old father, in restoring to him his sight. And what is the office that your angel guardian fulfils in your regard, if not of doctor, and of doctor to the body no less than to the soul ? as I shall say below. So, the better to understand this, consider how there are three states of human life—one, while a child lives in the womb of its mother—second, from his birth to his death ; and up to the particular judgment of his soul : third, the state that follows death. Now in each of these states, conformably with all the actions of the angel Raphael, consider the special offices that your angel guardian performs towards yourself. And as for the first condition of life, the Scripture tells that when the aged Tobias wished to send his son on a long journey, he sought

for a safe companion to send him with (Tob. v.). Then, before the worthy young man came out of his father's house, God sent His Angel, who, appearing in human form, offered himself to him as guide, and as companion in all his pilgrimage. O immeasurable charity, and more than paternal care of our Creator, who before you came forth from your mother's womb, before you had any knowledge of your enemies, or of the dangers that awaited you, gave command to one of those blessed Spirits who ever behold and rejoice in His divine presence, and to that very one who was at first the guardian of your mother, to take care of you, beginning at that tender age when you were exposed to many dangers, and he preserved you from these, as well as your mother, so as not to be prevented from arriving safely to the grace of Baptism and being inscribed in the number of the Sons of God! But what have I said? That your Creator, while you were still in your mother's womb, had this care, was thus mindful of your well-being? Nay, from eternity, before He created the Angels, before He at the beginning made anything, when the abysses as yet were not, and He had not yet set the foundations of the heaven and the earth, then God remembered you, miserable man, and was so anxious for your salvation. And although in His eternal mind He foresaw your great ingratitude and unworthiness, yet in His sheer goodness, without any merit of yours preceding it, He so disposed as not only to give you that help, but also to give you all those benefits, that from the moment of your conception you have received and that you shall receive in the future, up to that last and greater than all other benefits—your eternal happiness.

Further, as to the second part of your life, when you had come forth into the light of this world, the sacred Scripture continues how the Angel Raphael, coming forth with Tobias from his father's house, promised to lead him safe and accompanied him faithfully in all that journey (*ib.*) No otherwise, no sooner were you born, than God accompanied you with one of these celestial citizens so that he as your special guard and guide should undertake your protection and be in heaven as it

were your advocate in the presence of His Majesty ; for in this life we are all in the position of children and have need of a tutor and ' pedagogue ' (Gal. iv), to guide us and from time to time to take us by the hand and uphold us, lest our feet stumble in the stones of some sin, or again in some perilous passage ; who should take us up in his arms, so that we pass safe, not even noticing the peril till we have passed it by.

Second, even as the Angel Raphael guided the young Tobias on the way (Tob. xii), giving him good advice and counsel, and especially, since he was to take a wife, instructed him how to prepare himself and make ready for his marriage, not indeed like carnal-minded men, but with a holy fear of God and with much prayer, even so your Angel Guardian gives you ever good counsels and inspirations, directing you in all your works, so as to excite and urge you to do many good deeds which without this help you would not do, and this, at times enticing you by the example of Christ our Lord and of His Saints, and again inflaming your will with the thought of the goodness of God, and of His infinite benefits, or illuminating the intelligence with fear of future judgment and the pains of hell.

Third : the Scripture proceeds to relate the benefits that Tobias received from the angel Raphael, both in his own person and in his temporal affairs (Tob. x). (Aloysius recalls the rescue of Tobias by the river Tigris : the restoration of sight to his father : his becoming heir to Raguel.) Well, what else do our Angel Guardians do, if not continually to watch over us to give us help in our needs, just as a mother does, who always keeps her eye upon her little son, lest he fall, or hurt himself ? So think from how many bodily perils he has saved you (Cf. pp. 69, 75) into which like so many others you might have run ; and again, how solicitous he has been to obtain for you temporal goods, like health, strength and other helps so that you might support your life conformably to your state therein, and to that which he saw to be most expedient for your salvation. Fourth, just as the angel Raphael (as he said) had care to present to God the prayers and good works of Tobias (Tob. xii), so our angel guardian plays the part of

procurator for us before God, presenting to Him your prayers, your desires, and the little of good works that you do, bringing back likewise from God to your soul always some gift, and divine grace. O could one but behold with what affection the holy angels ascend and descend upon us, as they did by the Ladder that the patriarch Jacob saw (Gen. xxviii)! They ascend, presenting our needs, praying the heavenly Father and asking mercy for us: and then they descend carrying back from the selfsame Father, holy inspirations, good thoughts, and other divine helps, at times also some fatherly correction, to wake us up, and to make us enter into ourselves so that we do not condemn ourselves along with this world (1 Cor. ii).

Fifth, even as the Angel Raphael taught Tobias how he must act in order to drive away the devil, lest he have dominion over him, against whom the Angel himself fought for the defence of the young man (Tob. viii); even so our Angel Guardian, just as a faithful Captain to whom has been given the guard of a fortress, keeps awake lest the enemy by force or by treachery gain the victory over us. Wherefore these holy Angels are the faithful sentinels whom the Lord says He set over the walls of Jerusalem, to guard His flock during the night-watches, lest the hellish wolf our adversary ravish, as lions too may do, our souls (Is. lxii). Again to these same Angel Guardians belong the words of the Apocalypse (Apoc. iii). Watch and confirm! for our Angel Guardian stays watchful for us against the devil, opposing himself to his onrush, healing the wounds he deals, depriving him of his forces, so that he have not so much power over us. On the other hand, he confirms us, now by removing from us many an occasion of sin, or drawing us back from many vices and sins into which without his help we should easily have run; or teaching us the way in which we should help ourselves in temptations, and again comforting us and giving us courage, when we are harassed and battered by temptations, and finally obtaining for us from the Lord increase of strength and of grace, to be able to resist and carry off the victory.

Sixth, just as the Angel Raphael further seized the devil

(that he might not kill Tobias, as he had done to all the other bridegrooms of his wife) and bound and imprisoned him in a desert, so our good Angel especially assists us at the hour of death to defend us more than ever at that hour, and to deliver us from the ambushes and assaults of the devil who then more than at any other time goes round seeking whom he may devour—and to preserve us specially from those sins to which at that crisis we are mostly subject, such as loss of faith, and despair (1 Pet. v) ; so that we may be able to go free from the miseries of this world into the heavenly country ; and after our soul has gone forth from the body, the same Angel accompanies and consoles it and encourages it to present itself with trust before the tribunal of God, putting forward the most precious merits of Jesus Christ, on which at the time of that judgment the soul must rely. And after by the divine sentence it is sent to cleanse in Purgatory what punishment remains, there the Angel often visits it, and consoles it, by giving it news of the suffrages that are being offered for it in this world, and assuring it of its future liberation.

Then, as to the third and last state of your life, recall what finally the Angel Raphael did, namely, after ensuring a wife to the young Tobias, and enriching him with all the goods of his father-in-law, and loading him with many gifts and riches, brought him back to his father's house (Tob. vi and x), where he was received with all the greater delight, as the distress, occasioned by his long absence and the fear of having lost him, had been greater. Now look similarly at the office of your faithful Guardian, who, when your soul shall have been cleansed from every stain, and is now come to the end of its long and perilous pilgrimage, and having in his goodness, like a heavenly paranymp, arranged that happy marriage—not indeed between you and the daughter of Raguel, but indeed of your soul with its heavenly Spouse, leads her, adorned with many a gift and divine graces, happily into heaven to that Jerusalem on high (Gal. iv), our mother : and there, with great joy and rejoicing of all the Angels, and Saints of Paradise by whom she had been so long awaited, he will present her

before the face of her heavenly Father, to receive from His divine hands the crown of glory, and of that happiness which ab æterno had been prepared for her, and towards which we poor men still groan and sigh in this vale of tears (Ro. viii). O a thousand times blessed is that soul, which, having been faithful to its Creator, and obedient to the good counsels of its Angel Guardian, after having praiseworthily spent the years of its life, will be by the selfsame Angel introduced into that blessed fatherland, wherein are the eternal dwellings of the righteous (Apoc. xxi) ! There shall be celebrated the true marriage of the Lamb with His dear spouse, there shall be full joy, perfect peace, and rest without end. But thou, my soul, if thou hast done naught else in all thy life but offend thy Creator, and disgust thy good Guardian Angel, tell me, what consolation can he have in taking thee before your Father ? And thou, with what face shalt thou ever endure to appear in His presence ? Alas, my God, must I then despair ? No, no. But knowing that Thy mercies are without number, and that in the person of that good Father in the gospel thou didst receive with such charity the son who turned to repentance (Luke xv), I trust, that if I yet again with grief and repentance return to Thee, my Father, Thou wilt not chase me away, but like a loving Father wilt receive me, and if not as an obedient son, at least as a penitent one. Now what can we return to the Lord for so many, so great benefits received from His Majesty ? (Ps. cxv). For all that we owe to those blessed Spirits, through whose means we have received it, we owe all of it to the Creator, who commanded His Angels to guard us in all our ways (Ps. xc). None the less, we owe to those Angel Guardians, for the great charity and faithful ministry that has been theirs in our regard, a great debt of gratitude. So think a little, what return can you make to your faithful Guardian, and what is the duty that you owe to him ?

And first for the help of your Angel, you owe him honour, devotion, and reverence, keeping yourself from doing anything in his sight that you would not do in the presence of any man

that was your superior. So woe to you, if this holy Angel, provoked by your negligences and sins, should judge you unworthy of his presence and angelic visitations. Besides, many are the virtues that please the holy Angels and that they wish to see in our souls, which we must with all diligence procure. They are, sobriety, chastity, voluntary poverty, frequent crying with devout tears, and fervent prayers. But above all, union, peace, and brotherly charity are the virtues that most of all are sought from us by the Angels of peace. O my soul, O most beautiful image of the Creator, if but you understood your dignity, how much you are loved and prized by God and respected by the Angels, certainly lest you do injury to him who has so honoured you, and lest you so grieve your most faithful Guardian, you would not so easily involve yourself and dishonour yourself with the filth and ugliness of sin (Mt. xviii). And if so great joy there is in heaven among all the Angels, over the conversion of one sinner, what sorrow and disappointment do you not think your good Angel must feel when by some sin you fall from divine grace ; and if he had blood to shed and a life that he could give, oh how willingly in the footsteps of his Lord would he not give it for your salvation ? So try to adorn yourself quicker than ever with the virtues that rejoice the Angels, and give glory to your Creator, so that from these seeds of precious merits, conformable to the virtues of the Angels, you may gather sweetest fruit, itself like the prize that belongs, too, to them.

Colloquy.

Pray to God our Lord that even as He has in such wonderful order distributed the duties and ministrations of His Angels for the benefit of man, so He would also deign to grant to you that your life may be continuously guarded by all those blessed Spirits that ever assist and serve His Divine Majesty in heaven, and defended from your cruel enemies. And even as He has granted to them so copious a gift of grace, that so He will grant to you too grace to be able to imitate better, through their prayers, their humility, charity, and purity ; so

that leading here below on earth an angel's life, you may be worthy there too to be like unto the Angels, and to rejoice with them in their longed-for and beatific vision.

References.

(1) The Lord says that unless we become like children, we shall not enter heaven, as He says in another place that of such is the kingdom of heaven. (Mt. xviii, 3 ; xix. 14.) So if we wish to be saved, we must have the qualities that children have ; we must be in our behaviour what they are in their years. Children are simple, without malice or deceit ; they are pure in mind and body, they esteem neither honour nor dishonour ; they do no harm to others and take no revenge for harm done to them. They do not contend with others, but yield to all, and finally they are respectful and easily docile to their elders. These are Christian virtues that Christ Himself professed and in which He bids us imitate Him when (Mt. xviii. 4) He says : Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart ; in which two virtues all the qualities above-mentioned are contained.

(2) The Lord also says (Mt. ii. 29) : He that shall make himself humble, like a child, he shall be the greater in the kingdom of heaven. Oh, how well the Apostle says that the wisdom of the flesh is contrary to that of God ! for in the world they are esteemed the greater who know best how to preserve the distinctions of rank and honours, while of such God takes no account. On the other hand, they who try most to humble themselves and put themselves under everyone's feet, these are the truly great in God's sight and shall be in heaven greater than the rest, according to the saying of the Wise Man (Eccl. iii. 20) : The greater thou art, humble thyself in all things, and thou shalt find favour before God.

(3) The more man makes himself less than others—the greater he shall be ; because the more humble he is, the liker and the nearer is he to Christ, who is over all. If then this is so should not Christians and spiritual persons contend, not for precedence and the first place, but rather for the last, because

he who wishes to have the first place on earth will find himself confused in heaven ! So do not let us be anxious to appear greater than others, because the most honoured is not the most just or the best but the other way round—it is the most just, who is most worthy of honour.

(4) If so great be the respect that we ought to bear towards the Holy Angels that for their sake, as the Lord commands (Mt. xviii. 10) we ought to keep ourselves from despising any other man, how small and low soever he be, so that the Apostle too (1 ad Cor. x) advised women to cover their heads in church so as not to offend by their frivolity and vanity the angels so eager for man's salvation, how much more ought we to guard ourselves from doing injury or insult to our neighbour ? because in offending them, we offend their angels, who, like friends and intimate familiars of God, will demand vengeance against us and without doubt will obtain it.

(5) Even as the Angels employ themselves with so much diligence and care in the guardianship of men, and yet in their minds never cease to see and contemplate the face of the heavenly Father, nor withdraw themselves from the divine love, because the care and solicitude they have for us is subordinate to that love and for its sake is undertaken by them, so spiritual persons who have charge of outside occupations ought to arrange to undertake them so that they not only do not impede interior ones, but rather help them to their spiritual profit and to the contemplation of the things of God. This will happen if, after the example of the holy Angels, they manage to have their exterior actions proceed from and have efficacy from their interior ones and thence are ordered and regulated, so that they be not assumed for any other reason than for the pure love of God.

(6) Those who have the charge of bringing back souls to God must learn never to give up the enterprise owing to disappointments that they may incur nor from doubt of the good success of those whom they spiritually help ; even as by their example the Guardian Angels teach, who never give up the care and guard of a sinner, disgusted as they may be by

their sins, and even if they were assured by revelation from God that those they had in charge were not to be converted ; but they never cease urging them to repent while they are in this life and in a state in which repentance and return to God are possible.

(7) The pagan philosopher Seneca writing to a friend taught him that in order to speak ever and act according to the highest in him, he should always imagine that he had Cato near him as his severe censor. Of which instance we Christians ought with far better reason to make use, imagining to ourselves that in all our actions we have ever near us our Angel Guardians as our severe censors so that this picture may help us to stand ever above ourselves, and to take care of all that we say or do ; for if we act otherwise we shall have to fear that they who are now our advocates before God, will be, in the day of judgment, our accusers.

Such is the characteristic 'meditation' on the Angels. Yet it may suggest a fund of childlikeness in Aloysius that without it might not have been suspected. It shows too careful knowledge of the Scriptures, and the passage about children is from St. Hilary, *Comm. in Mt. xviii*. A few of the considerations belong to Aloysius's special period : but it communicates at once its clear, simple thought, and its intense ardour, to any soul.

THE ORATION TO PHILIP II OF SPAIN.

IF the great Demosthenes—at the mention of whose name, to use the words of Valerius Maximus, the notion of supreme and consummate eloquence sweeps over the mind—when about to speak in the presence of Philip, King of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great, on the very threshold of his speech was so stricken by the presence of so great a man that he was seen to faint : and if Cicero, fountain of eloquence, glory of the Latin tongue, at the trial of Milo, his great benefactor, did so tremble and grow pale, as though he had never yet achieved

any habit or fluency of speech, it had assuredly been no wonder, O most unconquered King, if I, in astonishment at the presence of Your Majesty, whereat all the whole round world faints away in spirit, and to whom I and all my family are bound by the bonds of so many benefits, if I, quite distraught by the vast splendour of Your glories, am seen utterly to be appalled and to tremble. I, who am not yet fully equipped with polished culture, none the less am to attempt to catch up, with the tiny strength of my skill, with the excellence of your race, the singular graces that by nature and by fortune are yours, the superb victories that your energy and prowess have won, and the whole tenour of your life in the suppression of rebellions and the legitimate extension of the frontiers of your realm.

Though all this creates many a difficulty for me in this manner of speech yet your well-known and wonderful goodness of heart and tolerance, O most kindly king, so uplifts and corroborates me who was about to succumb before the magnitude of my task, that I venture fully to trust myself, feeling certain that you will attend rather to a heart that is utterly devoted to you, than to my clumsy and imperfect style: and so, offer your ears to hear.

Now if, as I had thought of doing, and had at first intended to speak, I were to begin to go back to the first origin of your family, so many generals, so many kings, famous in war, and vigorous emperors, all of them men most glorious and well-deserving of the Christian State, offer themselves to us, who had this ever before their eyes, and to this strained ever their thoughts—by exalting the Christian State, and destroying its enemies, and extirpating heresies, legitimately to amplify their dominion, that I could not even embrace them all in thought, still less find power to proclaim and narrate all their splendid deeds. You alone, Son of Charles V the Emperor, King of Spain, will I forthtell, you, whose goodness and excellence all men held for so assured—that they considered you bound to achieve the pinnacle of prosperity and glory simply because you had been educated by that great man, and

imbued with such virtuous principles and ideals : but further, so patent from your very youth and so manifest was your bent towards virtue, towards dignity, glory, and the carrying out great deeds, and especially towards the aggrandisement of the Christian Name, that not only did it come up with their opinion of your greatness (conceived by them because of your education by such a Father), but by far outstripped it. For nothing so concerned your noble soul from your very boyhood's years, as the imitation of the virtues of your ancestors, and that you should add to them the crown of modesty, temperance, faith, devotion, benignity, mercy, justice, generosity and liberality, regarding that to be true glory which, won by your own effort, should propagate your name into the thoughts of generations yet to come, by means of the applause of the greatest men now living. In consequence of all this, such were the hopes of all Christians concerning you, O supreme Prince, that everyone was sure that when you reached adult years you would do deeds such as to cause all to marvel at you as at some hero descending from the skies to earth. And a proof of the prowess that was hoped from you, was given. The Kingdom of England was already, owing to its rejection of the obedience due to the Sovereign Pontiff, defiled by innumerable heresies, when you, joined in wedlock with Margaret Queen of England and having thereby received the dominion over that realm, did root out heresies from thence and reduce it to its pristine obedience to the Roman Church. Had not an untimely death snatched her away, without offspring, unto the undoing of that kingdom, without any doubt you would have bestowed upon it its pristine religion and obedience. She however died, and behold ! Henry, son of Francis, King of France, took arms against Flanders, and the more this struck into all Christians who were on tip-toe with their hopes for peace, terror at sight of a new war between new princes, and the more it was seen to add energy to the enemies of the Christian State and courage to invade it, the more did it raise high your name and increase and establish the glory that men already saw to be yours. Though you had already provided

sufficient evidence, with how high faith, with what prowess, you would defend the religion of Christ from its enemies, now, girding yourself up wholeheartedly for the Gallic War, and showing your customary courage and experiencing your customary fortune, you so routed the well-equipped and numerous army of the foe, you so defeated so many famous captains, that after so terrible a disaster the Gauls realized that they lacked forces for any more waging war against so famous a prince whose might they had experienced, and were reduced by you to the conditions of the hoped-for peace : you restored Cyrna (Corsica) to the Ligurians (Genoa), and as for Emmanuel Philibert, who had previously been stripped of his power by the same French because he had followed the side of Charles V your father, you replaced him in possession of the whole of Piedmont and of the Allobroges (Savoy). Yet by all this you were not puffed up, like Hannibal by the battle of Cannae, but, in your goodness and kindness towards the conquered king, you bound him to yourself by ties of kinship. Great indeed your virtue in victory ! great your piety in restoring Christian peace ! great your justice in giving back to each that which was his own : but greatest of all your benevolence to the conquered !

Though all this would seem to suffice to consecrate you among the immortals, yet you regarded it as nothing, being one who had not only thought of bringing peace to Christians, but of trampling down their savage foe. You first went to Spain and there in victorious battle subdued the Moors who by the help lent them by the Turks had fallen from the Faith : and thereupon, to free the Christian State from the enormous danger in which it lay (for its foe had prepared a powerful fleet to its undoing), you entered into an alliance with Pius V, the Supreme Pontiff, and with the Republic of Venice, and built yourself a fleet, in numbers more weak, but in nature stronger. Its leader (for you yourself were detained by business in Spain), John of Austria, was assigned to it as Captain, and, encountering Ali, the enemy captain at Nau-pactus (Lepanto), joined battle on the sea, defeated him,

and slew him, together with very many other famous pirates.

Besides these two glorious victories, there would be much more that I could say about the greatness of your power and might, for example, the victory of Tunis, over so strong and so numerous an army, and your prolonged activity against the Flemish in rebellion against you—you preferred to bring them to your side rather by a protracted war than by a fierce one—things that would be great and marvellous in other princes, but in you, when compared with your other deeds and victories would be but mediocre. So, lest by crude and tedious speech I may further tire your ears, I come to this recent triumph over the realm of Portugal. Now if what I have so far said of you and of your greatness, seem mighty and marvellous, much mightier and worthy of greater amazement is what remains to be told, all will confess. And not merely because of a victory carried off over men so valiant in arms and war, nor the acquisition of a realm to which so many kings do bow, but because of your justice, prudence, and admirable clemency in its conquest, a clemency whereby you restrained your Castilian army, between which and the Portuguese an ancient hatred reigned, from depredation and from massacre, you conquered a vast army of rebels in that Kingdom and subdued the whole realm into obedience to yourself. Their chief was set to flight, whom, when by the assistance of your enemies (for a French fleet was built for him) he was endeavouring to ravage and usurp your Islands, you again attacked, defeated, and made an end of at sea, but you drew to yourself the conquered Portuguese so mercifully that the very men who had been seen to take arms against you and to be on fire to fight, now were beheld to weep when you departed.

O happy Prince, O King most mighty, who not only dost embrace the whole world within thy Empire, but art moreover endowed with such spiritual gifts as to open a path across the drawn swords of the enemy, to conquer their wrath, to lay low their hate, to mingle with the foeman's blood, the foeman's tears!

I well realize, O most clement King, that in view of the greatness of thy deeds I enfold them in all too brief a speech : but who could possibly adorn with worthy praise the deeds of a King most clement, most just, most prudent and most powerful, who ' in thy sole self hast our poor glories' sum ' ? History praises Antiochus, King of Asia, because his worship of justice was such as to lead him to prefer that the cities of Asia should obey the laws rather even than his own rescripts. Cicero hymns Gnaeus Pompey, because private citizens found him so easy of access. But thou, with what praises dost thou deserve to be extolled, most Affable Prince, who willest that approach to thee should be so easy to all, even the humblest, that thou, who in dignity and power outstrippest all other princes, art seen to be equal to the lowest in thine accessibility, though thou enjoyest all these combined gifts of nature and of fortune that we have commemorated, and art illustrious with so many glorious deeds and victories, that Flanders, Spain, Africa, and Greece have experienced ! Famous Kings, vigorous Captains, great armies have been annihilated by thee, latest of all hast thou subdued the realm of Portugal, and what ranks highest in the Christian folk, thou didst conquer its formidable foe in naval battle, and the Moors, who had fallen from their due faith, thou didst recall to their duty. All this, being new among men, nor hitherto seen simultaneously in one Prince, should demand new styles of oratory, a new spokesman, endowed with a new gift of eloquence, erudition, and fluency, if he were to express all this befittingly. I well see this to be so. Since however I cannot be such an one, frightened off by the magnitude of your worth, I here make an end of speaking, thinking I have done my duty if I urge that not only my gift of speech—which is nil—but that all my powers, gifts, eloquence, fall infinitely below your worthy praise. I have spoken !

The original of this Oration existed at Louvain, but was destroyed in the sack of that city during the war. Happily it had been printed by Fr. A. Pruvost, S.J., in 1860, and exists

in facsimile. I agree that however much his professors may have helped him as to the outline of his composition, Aloysius certainly wrote it all himself, if only because of the extreme awkwardness, here and there, of its syntax and its enormous sentences, which I have broken up, but, because of the alarming solecism 'te . . . ad maturam perventum aetatem,' which his professors can only have left because they had resolved (or Aloysius had insisted) that the King should be presented with a genuinely spontaneous effort.

The scheme of the speech follows accurately the rules laid down by Cicero or whoever wrote the *De Partitionibus Oratoriis* (c. xiii). He also uses Valerius Maximus *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia*, viii. 7; see Aulus Gellius, *Noctes atticae*, viii, 9. Cicero pro Milone, i. I add, that Philip's education, under Juan Martinez Siliceo, had in fact been good; and that Aloysius's idea of recent history was formed, naturally, entirely under Spanish influence. Still, he should not have called Mary Tudor 'Margaret.' Nor can Philip truly be said to have entered upon the possession of the kingdom of England, though he took the title of its king; nor was it Philip precisely who restored the Catholic faith to it. Moreover Henri II, son of François I of France did not wait for the death of Mary to attack Flanders: she died in fact during the negotiations for the treaty in 1558. Aloysius's presentiment of the peace itself is purely Spanish. After the defeat of the French at St. Quentin, August 10th, 1557, and at Gravelines, July 1st, 1558, the treaty of Château Cambresis was signed, the French having retaken Calais and Thionville, and at the desire of the Pope, when the French and Spanish armies on either side of the Somme were said to be about equal. The result of the treaty was a give-and-take, and I think that Aloysius is here showing tact, inasmuch as he *praises* Philip for not displaying Hannibal's elation, whereas others were criticising him for having all too well imitated the Carthaginians by not profiting sufficiently by his victory. The 'Baetici' alluded to by Aloysius are the Moors of Granada who occupied the old province of Baetica. John

of Austria was the illegitimate son of Charles V, generalissimo of the whole allied army at Lepanto. Pius V might truthfully be placed more in the forefront of this episode than Philip. The expedition against Tunis was in 1573, under the same Don John; John also succeeded de Requesens, successor of the cruel Alva, and preceded Alexander Farnese, in the Netherlands, to which Aloysius inaccurately gives the ancient name of Pleumosii. I confess that in order to emphasize Philip's ultimate benevolence towards the Portuguese, a good deal of antecedent history has to be omitted; while the concluding lines of praise for accessibility are rather all but verbatim quotations from Cicero than accurate descriptions of Philip, even though he was not then so melancholy and aloof as he became. 'Iani uero ita faciles aditus ad eum privatorum . . . ut is qui dignitate principibus excellit, facilitate par infimis esse uideatur.' Cic. De Imp. Pomp., xiv. 41. Thus then exteriorly did Aloysius conform himself to the exigencies of place and time, and indeed within this framework of ideas did his personal life develop, and a world, thus conceived, was what he renounced.

INDEX

- Academies (literary), 38
 Acquaviva; Claudio, x, 110, 116,
 128, 217, 233
 Alcalà, 92
 Aliprandi, Elena, 168, 184 *sqq.*, 193
 Alpieri, G., 199
 Angels, St. Aloysius's Meditation
 on the, 166, 267-290.
 Andréa, Sant', 137
 Annunziata, Santissima (at Flor-
 ence), 55; (at Rome), 147, 152,
 253
 Barnabites, The, 69
 Bellarmine, Robert, xiv, 161, 173,
 174, 219
 Bembo, 37, 45
 Borlasco, Br., 174, 177
 Borromeo, St. Charles, 55, 63-68,
 112
 Brera College, 112
 Canisius: St. Peter (his *Medita-
 tions*), 63
 Casale Maggiore, 28
 Castel Goffredo, 6, 15, 168, 179, 194
 Castiglione, Baldassare, 42-46
 Castiglione delle Stiviere, 18-20, 36,
 and *passim*
 Ceparì, V., ix *sqq.*, and *passim*
 Corbinelli, Fr. L., 222, 223
 Dress, 47, 54
 Este, family of, 10-13, etc.
 Europe at the end of the Sixteenth
 Century, 24-27
 Fabrini, Fr., 219, 220
 Fiesole, 33, 34
 Gagliardi, Fr., 115, 198
 Games, 39, 53
 Ghizoni, Clement, 35
 Gonzaga, Aloysius, St., ancestry,
 3-14; birth, 22; boyhood at
 Castiglione, Casal Maggiore,
 Castiglione ("conversion"),
 Monferrato, Lucca, Fiesole,
 27-34
 — Education at Florence (realiza-
 tion of sin, vow of chastity),
 46-56; at Mantua (illness and
 fast), 58-60
 — Sojourn at Castiglione (medita-
 tion; ideal of active work and
 foreign missions; First Com-
 munion), 62-68; Monferrato
 (studies, and desire to enter
 "religion"), 69-74; Casti-
 glione (penances; "Direct
 Me") 74-77
 — Voyage to Madrid and sojourn
 at the Spanish Court (studies
 there; momentary slackening
 of fervour; gradual under-
 standing of his vocation and
 decision to enter the Society
 of Jesus), 93-96; preliminary
 struggles, 78-101; return to
 Italy ("grand tour" of the
 Courts; his flight from Casti-
 glione; preliminary consent
 given to his joining the S.J.,
 110; stay at Milan and
 Mantua; protracted struggles,
 and abdication), 102-125
 — Journey to Rome, visit to the
 Pope, and entry into noviciate,
 126-133

- Noviciate (Sant' Andréa ; death of his father (143) ; the Gesù ; Naples ; studies at Roman College ; he takes his vows), 137-167
- Diplomatic mission concerning the fief of Solferino, and his brother's marriage, 168-195
- Return to Rome, and the consummation of his spiritual life, 196-216
- The Plague of 1591 ; Aloysius's illness and death, 217-234.
- His spiritual development, 29, 31, 32, 52-56, 58, 60, 62, 63, 68, 69, 73, 74-77, 88-90, 92-96, 105-108, 115, 138-142, 153-167, 197, 198, 210-216
- Popes and St. Aloysius, xi-xiii, 93, 161, 235, 237, 239, 240, 245, 249, 259-263
- Gonzaga, ancestry of clan, 3 *sqq.*
- Alfonso, uncle of St. A., 16, 108, 168, 178, 179, 186
- Aloysius Alexander, grandfather of St. A., 15
- Ferrante, father of St. A., 16, 20-22, 28, 32, 33, 59, 69, 70, 84, 85, 90, 96, 97-101, 109, 112, 114-116, 118, 123, 142-143
- Francis, brother of St. A., x, xi, 19, 73, 171
- Hannibal (Fr. Francis, Capuchin), 97-99, 103, 143
- Marta (Donna M. of Tana Santena of Chieri), mother of St. A., 21-23, 27, 32, 59, 69, 73, 79, 90, 96, 143, 146, 165, 176, 177, 178, 194, 195, 206-208, 219, 224-227, 234
- Rodolfo, brother of St. A., 33, 46, 59, 73, 103, 111, 168-195, 199-201, 203, 209, 210
- Scipio, Cardinal, 110, 128, 154, 221
- Vespasian, Duke of Sabionetta, 16-18, 208.
- Vincent, Duke of Mantua, 72, 106, 117-148, 168 and *sqq.*
- Vincent, Cardinal, 108-119
- William, Duke of Mantua, 56, 169, 171
- Granada, Luis de, 88
- Guelfucci, Fr. A., 173, 205, 229, 232
- Italy, Condition of in St. Aloysius's time, 25, 26, 36-46, 105, 106
- Lettere delle Indie*, 63
- Loarte, Fr. de, 55
- Loreto, 22, 126
- Lorraine, Christina Duchess of, 68, 201
- Love literature, 37
- Lucca, 33
- Madrid, 83
- Mantegna, 8
- Mantua, history of the Gonzagas there, 3-14 ; Court of, 56, 58, 116-118, etc.
- Mary of Austria, 78
- Medici, Francis, Grand Duke of Tuscany, 52, 117 ; Giovanna, her funeral, 48 ; Don John de Medici, 49, 218
- Milan, 112
- Monferrato, 13, 32, 69, 74
- Novellara, noviciate of, 103
- Paterno, Fr., 92, 96
- Pescatore, Fr., 133, 148, 206

- Peter's, St., 128, 130, 203
Philip II of Spain, 91, 290-297
Piatti, Fr., ix, 138, 160
Pitti gardens, 51
Plague of 1591, 217 *sqq.*
- Relics, history of St. Aloysius's,
253 *sqq.*
Religion at end of sixteenth
century, 25-27
- Sabionetta, 16; *see* Gonzaga,
Vespasian
- Sainte-Baume, 82
Salombrini, Br., 196
Sixtus V, 130-132
Society of Jesus, the, 95
Solferino, 6, 15, 168-170, etc.
Stage-plays, 70-73
- Thérèse de Lisieux, Ste., 249
Turco, P. del, 29-31, 33, 46, 79-81
- Vasquez, Fr. G., 92, 157

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